



Thelymitra sanscilia

Common Name(s):

Sun Orchid

Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Critical

Distribution:

Endemic, North Island, where it is apparently confined to Northland.

Habitat:

Open gum-land scrub and in open ground in association with kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides* var. *linearis* (Kirk) W.Harris) woodland.

Features*:

Plant at flowering 100-400 mm tall. Leaf solitary, 100-300 x 10-15 mm, fleshy, strap-like, dark green or red-green, "v" shaped in cross-section. Inflorescence a slender spike-like raceme arising from leaf, 100-600 mm tall. Flowers (1-)3(-10), opening one at a time (if at all), and only on very still sunny days. Perianth 8-12 mm long, usually mauve, occasionally white, without stripes or spots. Sepals, petals and labellum similar, broadly elliptic, narrowing abruptly to an acute tip. Central column white, with a brown band near apex. Column apex hooded, usually deeply cleft. Column-arms falcate, erect usually without, or occasionally possessing 1 or 2 prominent hairs. Post anther lobe overtopping anther, brown above middle and yellow on margin, inrolled as to appear deeply cleft, the 2-halves meeting along a midline above the anther.

Flowering:

September - October

Fruiting:

December - January

Threats:

Known from a handful of sites from Te Paki to Pipiwai near Whangarei. Not common at any particular location.

***Attribution:**

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2007. Description subsequently published in Rolfe & de Lange (2010).

References and further reading:

Rolfe, J.R.; de Lange, P.J. 2010: Illustrated guide to New Zealand sun orchids, *Thelymitra* (Orchidaceae). Jeremy Rolfe, Wellington.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=42



Caption: *Thelymitra sanscilia*
Photographer: Kevin Matthews



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