



Caladenia alata

Common Name(s):

None known

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Indigenous. North Island from Te Pahi to about Rotorua thence disjunct to the Horowhenua. Exact distribution still unknown it was only recently (1980s) recognised from New Zealand

Habitat:

Coastal to lowland (more rarely montane - up to 800 m a.s.l.). Often in gumland scrub or on open clay pans, in skeletal soils on steep rocky ridges, on the margins of peat bogs or within open sinter and rock in and around geothermal vents. More rarely found in the leaf litter under tall manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*) dominated scrub or within seral forest. Usually in dry sites and plants are usually withered off and gone by November.

Features*:

Terrestrial dark green to reddish-green early spring flowering orchid usually occurring at solitary plants sometimes as small colonies of up to 20 plants. All parts finely but sparsely glandular hairy. Leaf solitary up to 60 x 3 mm long, linear, dark green to reddish-green. Stem erect, slender somewhat wiry, up to 100 mm tall, thin and very wiry, sparsely eglandular-glandular hairy. Floral bracts 1(-2). Flowers 1(-2) up to 10 mm diameter, in lax racemes, perianth very pale mauve, pale pink, reddish or white often suffused pale china blue, if darker coloured usually fading to pink or white near flower centre. Sepals up to 3 mm long, narrowly-lanceolate to broadly lanceolate, apex acute to subacute; dorsal sepal erect, others spreading. Petals up to 3 mm long, lanceolate to broadly lanceolate, apex sharply acute, spreading or projecting forwards. Labellum 3-lobed, marked with transverse cerise bars, disc with 2 more or less equal lines of stalked calli extending nearly to apex, stalks white, clavate, callus heads yellow, lateral lobes erect, column-embracing, more or less entire, often finely crimped to crenulate toward mid-lobe; mid-lobe broadly triangular, strongly recurved under labellum, margins entire, usually bearing a solitary, flattened, orange or yellow callus on either side of mid-lobe base. Column erect to slightly recurved, white or pale pink or mauve, marked with up to 5 darker transverse, red to cerise bars, column wings distinctly broadening toward apex.

Flowering:

August - November

Fruiting:

October - January

Threats:

In New Zealand *Caladenia alata* is a biologically sparse species usually occurring in diffuse, often widely scattered populations of few to many individuals.

*Attribution:

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2007. Description based on herbarium specimens and subsequently published in de Lange et al. (2007).

References and further reading:

- de Lange, P.; Rolfe, J. St George, I. Sawyer J. 2007: Wild orchids of the lower North Island. Department of Conservation, Wellington. 194pp.
- Hopper, S.D.; Brown, A.P. 2004: Robert Brown's *Caladenia* revisited, including a revision of its sister genera *Cyanicula*, *Ericksonella* and *Pheladenia* (Caladeniinae: Orchidaceae). *Australian Systematic Botany* 17: 1-240.
- Jones, D.L.; Clements, M.A.; Sharma, I.K.; Mackenzie, A.M. 2001: A New Classification of *Caladenia* R.Br. (Orchidaceae). *The Orchadian* 13: 389-419.
- Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.
- Rogers, R.S. 1924: *Petalochilus*: a New Genus of New Zealand Orchids. *Journal of Botany* 62: 65-67.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=618



Caption: *Petalochilus alatus* at Whangaroa

Photographer: Bill Campbell



Caption: *Petalochilus alatus*

Photographer: Kevin Matthews