



Taeniophyllum norfolkianum

Common Name(s):

minute orchid, orchid spaghetti, Norfolk Island ribbonroot

Current Threat Status (2012):

Coloniser

Distribution:

Indigenous. New Zealand, North Island. Also on Norfolk Island where it had previously be regarded as endemic.

Habitat:

In New Zealand this species has so far been recorded only from the upper trunk and branches of gorse (*Ulex europaeus*). On Norfolk Island it is a locally common epiphyte of Norfolk Island pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*) and *Wilkstroemia australis* within the central forested part of the island.

Features*:

Diminutive epiphytic orchid; plant 30-50 mm diameter, growing tightly appressed to bark in moist, well lighted to semi-shaded situations. Roots terete, fleshy, swollen, c.1.0-1.5 mm diameter, up to 25 mm long, pale green to yellow-green. Leaves reduced to caducous scales on inflorescence. Inflorescence a 1-6-flowered raceme; raceme 15-25 mm long, bracteose, peduncle and rhachis capillary, zig-zagged between flower; bracts minute, narrowly ovate, caducous. Sepals and petals greenish yellow, fleshy, scarcely opening, and only then in the upper 1/2 to one 1/3. Dorsal sepal 3.5 x 0.5 mm, lateral sepals 3.2 x 0.6 mm. Petals 3.2 x 0.6 mm. Labellum 1.5 mm long, scaphoid, 3.2-3.3 mm long, minutely 3-lobed, bearing minute apical appendage; spur c.1,3 mm long. Capsule ellipsoidal, 6 mm long.

Flowering:

November

Fruiting:

Unknown

Threats:

The only known New Zealand population which was discovered late in 2009 occurs on private within a gorse dominated shrubland and silver fern (*Cyathea dealbata*) - mahoe (*Melicytus ramiflorus*) forest remnant south of Whangarei. At this stage the species is not known to be directly threatened within this habitat though it is vulnerable to fire. As *Taeniophyllum* is very small and easily overlooked it is likely that it occurs elsewhere in northern New Zealand. Because the species was discovered in late 2009 it has yet to receive a formal threat ranking. However, based on available evidence the species probably best qualifies as "Data Deficient".

*Attribution:

This description was prepared by P. J. de Lange 27 September 2010 based on New Zealand specimens supplemented by Jones (2006) - capsule description from Green (1994, as *T. muelleri* though based on Norfolk Island specimens).

References and further reading:

Beadel, S.; Renner, M.; Brandes, U. 2010: A new species of epiphytic orchid for New Zealand, near Whangarei. *Trilepidea* 82: 3-4.

Green, P.S. 1994: *Flora of Australia* 49 - Oceanic Islands 1. Canberra, AGPS.

Jones, D.L. 2006: *A complete guide to the native orchids of Australia including the island territories*. Sydney, New Holland Publishers Ltd.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=6662



Caption: On gorse. Nov 2010.
Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Caption: On gorse. Nov 2010.
Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe