



Thelymitra malvina

Common Name(s):

Mauve Sun Orchid

Current Threat Status (2012):

Non Resident Native - Coloniser

Distribution:

Indigenous. North Island where known locally from the North Cape area, Ahipara Gumfields, Kaimaumau and Lake Ohia wetlands near Kaitaia and from Ngawha Springs near Kaikohe. Common in eastern Australia in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.

Habitat:

Open ground within peat bogs and wetlands, nearly always found in association with rotting kauri (*Agathis australis* (D. Don) Lindl.) logs.

Features*:

Glabrous, terrestrial orchid. Tubers ovoid 10-30 x 5-12 mm, fleshy, pinkish-grey. Leaf linear to linear-lanceolate, 100-350 x 5-20 mm, light to dark green with a purple base, erect, canaliculate, fleshy, abaxial surface ribbed, sheathing at base, apex acute. Inflorescence 0.25-0.75(-0.9) m tall, 1.5-5.0 mm diameter, stout, fleshy, straight, green to purple-green. Sterile bracts (2-)3, linear to linear-lanceolate, 20-100 x 4-11 mm, closely sheathing, acute to acuminate, green or purple-green, upper bract usually free with base usually only half encircling the scape. Fertile bracts 8-30 x 3-6 mm, green or purple-green, ovate-acuminate to obovate-acuminate, sheathing the pedicels. Pedicels 5-15 mm long, slender. Ovary cylindrical to narrow-obovoid, 5-12 x 2-4 mm. Flowers 3-25, 18-32 mm diameter, slate blue to mauve inside, sepals greenish outside, opening readily in warm weather. Perianth segments 8-16 x 3-7 mm, concave, acute, shortly apiculate; dorsal sepal elliptic to lanceolate; lateral sepals elliptic to lanceolate, asymmetric; petals ovate to lanceolate; labellum elliptic to linear-lanceolate, often narrower than other segments. Column erect, 6-7.5 x 2.5-3.7 mm, mauve; post-anther lobe cucullate, 2-4 x 1.5-2.5 mm, tubular, inflated, compressed dorsally, curved gently, dark reddish brown, apex shallowly bilobed, lobes toothed, orifice small, yellow; post-anther lobe extension 0.6-0.2 mm; auxiliary lobes absent; lateral lobes converging 1-1.5 mm long, digitiform, obliquely erect, each with a more or less terminal, dense, broom of mauve or pink cilia 1-1.5 mm long. Anther inserted near middle of column, ovoid, 2.5-3.5 x 1.2-2.2 mm, the connective prolonged into a 0.5-1.0 mm long beak. Stigma at base of column, 1.8-2.6 x 1.5-2.5 mm, ovate-quadrangle. Capsules 12-20 x 4-6 mm, obovoid, erect, ribbed.

Flowering:

(September-) October (-November)

Fruiting:

October - January

Threats:

Plant collectors are a constant problem because it is a conspicuous orchid with very attractive flowers. It is threatened at many sites by invasive weeds, changes to the local water table, and removal of swamp kauri logs for furniture making. However, it is also reasonably secure at several sites and indications are that it actively spreading in suitable habitats throughout Northland

*Attribution:

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2007. Description subsequently published in Rolfe & de Lange (2010). See also Jeanes (2004).

References and further reading:

Jeanes, J. 2004: A revision of the *Thelymitra pauciflora* R.Br. (Orchidaceae) complex in Australia. *Muelleria* 19: 19-79.

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=731



Caption: *Thelymitra malvina* flower at Lake Ohia

Photographer: Bill Campbell



Caption: *Thelymitra malvina* flower spray at Lake Ohia

Photographer: Bill Campbell