



Pterostylis irwinii

Common Name(s):

Irwins Greenhood

Current Threat Status (2012):

Nationally Vulnerable

Distribution:

Endemic. North Island only on the Waimarino River Plain near Erua. In the South Island mainly in the north-west as far south as the Buller River, and also down the Wairau River. Exact distribution still unclear. Easily overlooked on account of its short flowering season.

Habitat:

Montane (above 600 m a.s.l.). Although exact habitat preferences are uncertain this species seems to prefer damp, shaded, or well-lighted situations in tall forest along river flats, or in steep hill country overlying primarily base-rich geologies (especially calcareous mud and siltstones, limestone, marble and soils derived from andesitic tephra).

Features*:

Terrestrial tuberous herb growing in diffuse colonies. Plants dimorphic. Sterile plants 60-100 mm tall; 2-3-leaved; leaves linear, 40-120 x 30-50 mm, dark green, entire acuminate. Flowering plants 150-200 mm tall, stems reddish. Leaves 3-5, cauline, widely spaced, spreading; lamina linear, 60-170 x 4-5 mm, dark green to bronze-green, glossy beneath, sessile, sheathing at base; margins entire; apex acuminate. Pedicel 20 mm long, slender. Ovary linear, 10-13 mm long, ribbed, reddish or red-brown. Flower solitary, 35-45 x 10-12 mm, erect, translucent white and dark green with red to red-brown suffusions in the apex of the galea and lateral sepals; galea shallowly gibbous at the base then erect before bending forwards, the apex erect to obliquely erect, the dorsal sepal much longer than the petals. Dorsal sepal ovate-lanceolate in outline when flattened, 43-48 x 14-16 mm, expanded near the base then tapered to the long-acuminate or attenuate apex. Lateral sepals obliquely erect to erect, hardly embracing the galea, leaving a very wide lateral gap to the petal margins, much of the labellum visible through this gap; upper part of sinus flat when viewed from the side, with a deep, relatively wide central notch when viewed from the front; internally the sinus projecting inwards as a small platform-like projection; conjoined part 14-16 x 8-10 mm, prominently scabrid, narrowed to 2.5 mm wide at base, tapered into the free points; free points 24-27 mm long, involute, tapered, erect, the tips extending above the galea. Petals obliquely linear-lanceolate, 30-33 x 3-4 mm, strongly falcate, long-acuminate, green with white stripes, red-brown toward the apex. Labellum erect, curved forwards in the distal third, the apex protruding prominently through the sinus in the set position; labellum hinge ligulate, 3 x 2 mm; lamina oblong-lanceolate, 15.0-18.0 x 3.2-3.5 mm, red-brown; apex subobtuse to acute; callus raised, 0.7 mm wide near apex; basal appendage 3.0-3.5 mm long, penicillate. Column 14-16 mm long, bent away from the ovary at 35 degrees at the base then erect, green and white; column foot 4 mm long. Column wings 6-7 mm long; basal lobe 3 x 1 mm, at an angle of about 35 degrees; apex obtuse; inner margins incurved, sparsely and shortly ciliate; mid-section 3 mm long, green; apical lobe 1.3 mm long, linear, obtuse. Stigma narrowly scutiform 3-4 x 2 mm, medial on the column, raised. Anther 1.8 mm long, very shortly rostrate. Pollinia linear-falcate, 1.5-1.8 mm long, yellow, mealy.

Flowering:

November - December

Fruiting:

January

*Attribution:

Description based on Jones et al. (1997).

References and further reading:

Jones, D.L.; Molloy, B.P.J.; Clements, M.A. 1997: Six new species of *Pterostylis* R.Br. (Orchidaceae) from New Zealand *The Orchadian* 12: 266-281

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=773



Caption: *Pterostylis irwinii*

Photographer: Peter de Lange



Caption: *Pterostylis irwinii*

Photographer: Ian St George