



Earina autumnalis

Common Name(s):

Easter orchid, raupeka

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Endemic. North, South, and Stewart Islands

Habitat:

Coastal to montane. Epiphytic, rupestral or terrestrial. Mostly on the trunks and branches of forest trees but also on rocks, cliff faces, banks and fallen, moss covered logs.

Features*:

Epiphytic or rupestral, rhizomatous, perennial, producing numerous leafy, unbranched, long persistent, wiry, cane-like stems up to 1.5 m long. Stems erect if short, pendulous otherwise.

Rhizomes extensive, much intertwined and firmly attached to substrate, fleshy, more or less spongy, initially creamy white maturing grey-white, thickly covered with sheathing scale-leaves or their weathered, fibrous remains. Leaf-sheaths closely imbricating, persistent, distichously arranged, 5-14 mm long, 3-4 mm diameter, cylindric to tubular, deeply split, scarcely flattened, each overlapping with and covering the lower third to one half of the leaf-sheath above, exposed surface pale grey with dark margins, weakly and diffusely maculate or not, spots if present orbicular, purple-black. Leaf-sheath junction with leaf lamina distinctly flared. Leaves weakly flexuose usually down-curved in upper portion; lamina persistent, disarticulating at leaf-sheath junction, weakly 1-3-nerved, 40-120 x 5-8 mm, mostly dark glossy green, broadly lanceolate, widest near base, tapering in upper third gradually to broad, subacute tip; lateral veins inconspicuous, midrib of upper lamina deeply and prominently channelled.

Inflorescence a racemose panicle. Panicle up to 100 mm long, mostly stiffly erect, rather wiry; racemes numerous, arranged distichously at short intervals up the stiff central axis, each lateral stem to 10 mm long, usually bearing a few crowded, empty bracts and up to 3 sessile flowers. Perianth 13-16 mm diameter, opening widely (flaring), waxy white. Sepals elliptic, slightly keeled subacute. Petals slightly broader and more obtuse. Labellum broad and obtuse, white except for yellow base, standing erect and half enclosing the column, transversely rhomboid, not lobed; distal margins slightly thickened and recurved; base with two crescent-shaped ridges leading down to a small bright yellow or yellow-orange pit-like nectary. Column shorter than labellum, broadest at base, wings minute, present as small lobes about level with the stigma, pollinia clavate. Capsules elliptic-ovoid, ovoid, deeply, longitudinally grooved, dark green maturing grey.

Flowering:

January - June

Fruiting:

April - August

Threats:

Not Threatened

*Attribution:

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2007. Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

References and further reading:

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285-309

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1826



Caption: *Earina autumnalis*

Photographer: Wayne Bennett



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