

# Libertia micrantha

## COMMON NAME

native iris, mikoikoi

## SYNONYMS

*Libertia pulchella* sensu Moore (1967)

## FAMILY

Iridaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Libertia micrantha* A.Cunn.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## NVS CODE

LIBMIC

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 38$

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (from about Mangonui south to Wellington but scarce in Northland), South Island (from Nelson and Marlborough to Fiordland, uncommon in the east)

## HABITAT

A widespread and locally common species of high rainfall forests and river banks. Mostly montane and in cloud forest in Northland otherwise widespread, though favouring montane habitats, or cooler places in lowland forest. Often found on fallen logs and root mounds, usually associated with mosses and liverworts



Lake Matheson. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 12/12/1981, Licence: CC BY.



Tararua Forest Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 29/12/2007, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Plants consisting of leafy fans erect or semi-erect; sparsely branched leafy rhizomes, 30–180 mm long, attached to substratum, sometimes insecurely, by thin, wiry roots. Leaves 30–220 × 1–5 mm, the downward-facing surface much duller than the upper, due to more white lines of stomata and raised cells being present; veins inconspicuous, leaf bases green or pale yellow, leaf margins often finely scabrid, stomata often only present on lower surface of leaf; leaf in transverse section simple, only one row of vascular bundles present, marginal vascular bundle absent, no sclerenchyma on inside of leaf sheath. Inflorescences long, usually greater than leaves; peduncle slender. Panicle simple; bracts 5–35 mm long, narrow lanceolate, green or brown when dried, in clusters of three or more; 1–8 flowers on very slender, usually pubescent pedicels, 13–35 mm long. Flowers white, 5–15 mm diameter, predominantly tepallate, outer whorl slightly shorter and narrower, elliptical with apiculus, inner whorl larger, elliptical with apical cleft. Staminal filaments very shortly connate; anthers c.1.5 mm long. Ovary triquetrous, c.¼ length of the perianth bud at anthesis; style branches not winged, pointing upwards. Capsule triquetrous, 2–3 × 2–5 mm; dehiscent by loculicidal splitting; valves keeled and strongly recurved at dehiscence, green-brown. Seeds 0.75–1.0 × 1.0–1.2 mm, rounded to egg-shaped, almost smooth, yellow.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Libertia micrantha* differs from all the other New Zealand species of *Libertia* by its smaller size, the presence of white lines on the abaxial side of the leaf, anatomically simple leaves, leafy rhizomes, bunches of bracts at inflorescence branches, pubescent pedicels, tepallate flowers, white pollen sacs, broad pollen sac connectives, and by its diploid chromosome number

## FLOWERING

September – December

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

December – June

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by the division of established plants. This species does best in semi-shade. *Libertia micrantha* is an attractive plant that deserves to be more widely cultivated than it is.

## ETYMOLOGY

**libertia:** Named after Marie-Anne Libert, (1782–1865) born & died in Malmedy, province of Liège, Belgium; botanist and mycologist

**micrantha:** Tiny flower

## ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Blanchon et al. (2002)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Blanchon, D.J.; Murray, B.G.; Braggins, J.E. 2002: A taxonomic revision of *Libertia* (Iridaceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 40: 437–456.

Young, M. 1990. A lowland site for *Libertia pulchella*. *Auckland Botanical Society Journal*, 45:4.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/libertia-micrantha/>