

Anthosachne falcis

COMMON NAME

grass

SYNONYMS

Elymus falcis Connor

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Anthosachne falcis (Connor) Barkworth et S.W.L.Jacobs

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

ANTFAL

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sickie-leaved wheatgrass

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (inland Waimakariri, Ashburton, Waitaki and Central Otago). Populations usually scattered.

HABITAT

Dry open ground, river beds, rocky sites, clay pans and within short tussock (*Festuca novae-zelandiae*) grassland from 450–1250 m a.s.l.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small, glaucous, loosely tufted grass. **Leaf-sheath** 20–50 mm, striate, retrorsely pubescent or glabrous. **Ligule** 0.3–0.5 mm, erose or finely toothed. **Leaf-blade** 50–150 × 0.5–0.7 mm, terete, involute, keeled and faintly ribbed, falcate, sinuous or irregularly curled, rarely straight, upper surface glaucous, with stiff erect, retrorse hairs 0.5–1 mm long, becoming glabrous, undersides densely hairy, lamina margin prickly-toothed, or with hairs 0.5 mm long. **Culms** 100–250 mm, prostrate to ascending, internodes smooth, glaucous. Inflorescences 20–100 mm, of 1–4 spikelets. **Spikelets** 40–50 mm, each with 4–6 shining florets. **Glumes** ± equal, 4–9 mm, keeled, 3-nerved, becoming awned, glabrous, margins papery. **Lemma** smooth except for prickly-teeth on keel above, extending into falcate awn 30–50 mm. **Palea** 7–10 mm, apex pointed, bifid. **Rachilla** 1.5–2 mm, short stiff hairy. **Callus** 0.75 mm, very shortly bearded, hairs less than or equal in length to callus. **Anthers** 2.5 mm yellow (purple in some plants).



Elymus falcis. Photographer: Alan Stewart, Licence: CC BY-NC.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to the grasses of New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA

Perhaps closest to *Anthosachne sacandros*, from which it differs by the short, falcate, sinuous or straight leaf-blades, which are glabrous or with scattered erect 1 mm long hairs, and prostrate to ascending culms. Recognition in field: small glaucous tufts with flower stems extending well above leaf tip. Similar to *A. aprica* (which is a larger plant, with more spikes held at a distinct angle in the inflorescence) or the exotic *A. scabra* (which is similar in size, but the leaves are flat, hairy, and with distinct auricles at the base). This species was transferred from *Elymus* to *Anthosachne* by Barksworth & Jacobs (2011).

FLOWERING

October–February

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, Yellow

FRUITING

November–March

LIFE CYCLE

Florets are dispersed by wind and attachment (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. Does best in dry climates. Prefers a sunny situation free of weeds. In strong sunlight the leaves often become very glaucous.

THREATS

A local endemic of restricted distribution that while not believed to be threatened occupies a very narrowly defined range that is ever increasingly vulnerable to loss of habitat through the expansion of the wine industry in Central Otago and the increasing urbanisation of the Waitaki and McKenzie Basins.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P. J de Lange, June 2005. Description adapted from Edgar & Connor (2000).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Barksworth ME, Jacobs SWL. 2011: The Triticeae (Gramineae) in Australasia. *Telopea* 13: 37–56.
Edgar E, Connor HE. 2000. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Christchurch, Manaaki Whenua Press. 650 p.
Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Anthosachne falcis* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/anthosachne-falcis/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/anthosachne-falcis/>