

Agrostis imbecilla

COMMON NAME

feeble bent

SYNONYMS

Agrostis tenella Petrie non Hoffm.

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Agrostis imbecilla Zotov

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

AGRIMB

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Sparse

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island, one record from Moawhango. South Island, infrequent in Canterbury and Otago

HABITAT

A montane, subalpine to alpine species of damp sites within tussock grassland.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Delicate, slender, tufted perennial plants (100–)150–350 mm tall, with long, rather fine, spike-like panicles on slender culms > overtopping leaves. **Leaf-sheath** narrow, membranous, light cream-brown to reddish, glabrous, distinctly ribbed. **Ligule** 0.8–1.6 mm, obtuse, lower surface glabrous. **Leaf-blade** 20–130 × 0.2–0.4 mm, involute, filiform, flaccid, undersides finely striate and, in young leaves scabrid, upper surface scabrid on ribs; margins scabrid, apex tapered, blunt. **Culm** filiform, erect or geniculate at base, internodes glabrous. **Panicle** (25–)50–90 × 2–3 mm, contracted, narrow-linear, pale purple. **Spikelets** 1.5–2.4 mm, pale greenish purple or pale yellow. **Glumes** equal, lanceolate, scabrid on keel and on margins near acute tip. **Lemma** 1.5–1.9 mm, glabrous, 5-nerved, ovate-oblong, apex denticulate, usually without awns, if present these up to 1 mm, scarcely projecting beyond glumes. **Palea** 0.1–0.2 mm, ovate. **Callus** with few minute hairs. Anthers 0.6–1 mm.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to the grasses of New Zealand](#)



SIMILAR TAXA

A distinctive species characterised by its very fine, rather slender panicles, and rather lax to flaccid leaves.

FLOWERING

Unknown

FRUITING

Unknown

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed and rooted pieces but will not flower without cold treatment. In humid climates it is difficult to maintain

THREATS

Not directly threatened, but listed because it is a naturally uncommon species of sporadic occurrence.

ETYMOLOGY

agrostis: Greek name for a kind of grass

imbecilla: Weak

ATTRIBUTION

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

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/agrostis-imbecilla/>