

Agrostis stolonifera

COMMON NAME

creeping bent

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Agrostis stolonifera L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

AGRSTO

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

A sprawling mat-forming grass with creeping stems, sometimes submerged in fast-flowing water, with fine many-branched flowerheads, either open or narrow depending on flowering stage.

DISTRIBUTION

Common throughout.

HABITAT

Wide variety of wetland and aquatic habitats, also in drier habitats including roadsides, wasteland, grassland and open scrub. Lowland to subalpine.

FEATURES

Sprawling stoloniferous, rooting at the nodes, mat or turf forming grass, 30-60 (100) cm tall. Can be submerged in clear fast-flowing streams/rivers. Leaf blade 1-20 cm long and 1-8 mm wide with an acute tip. Ligule 2-6 mm long, membranous. The flower heads are usually upright or bending upwards in a many-flowered open or contracted panicle 3-28 × 0.5-2.5-(6) cm.

SIMILAR TAXA

There are several similar sprawling wetland/aquatic grasses. *Paspalum distichum* has a shorter ligule and paired flower heads, *Glyceria* species have a boat-shaped leaf tip and cross-veins on the leaf sheath and *Alopecurus geniculatus* is often acutely bent at the nodes and has a spike-like flower head.

FLOWERING

Spring and summer

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Violet/Purple

FRUITING

Summer to autumn

LIFE CYCLE

Seed and stolons dispersed by water and contaminated machinery.



Agrostis stolonifera. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Agrostis stolonifera. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

YEAR NATURALISED

1878

ORIGIN

Europe, temperate Asia, N. America

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Pasture species.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Can be controlled manually, mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation.

ETYMOLOGY

agrostis: Greek name for a kind of grass

ATTRIBUTION

Prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Edgar E. and H. Connor. 2000. Flora of New Zealand. Volume 5. Manaaki Whenua Press: Lincoln, New Zealand.

Champion et al (2012). Freshwater Pests of New Zealand. NIWA publication.

<http://www.niwa.co.nz/freshwater-and-estuaries/management-tools/identification-guides-and-fact-sheets/freshwater-pest-species>

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

MORE INFORMATION

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