

# Anthosachne aprica

## COMMON NAME

blue wheat grass

## SYNONYMS

*Elymus apricus* Á.Löve et Connor

## FAMILY

Poaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Anthosachne aprica* (Á.Löve et Connor) C.Yen et J.L.Yang

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## NVS CODE

ANAAPR

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, Central Otago only

## HABITAT

A species of inland basins where it grows in short tussock (*Festuca novae-zelandiae* (Hack.) Cockayne) grasslands at elevations of 150–200 m.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect, glaucous, and tufted. **Leaf-sheath** 70–100 mm, keeled striate, becoming fibrous, glabrous, sparsely hairy or pubescent, margins papery. **Ligule** 0.3–0.5 mm, ciliate. **Leaf-blade** 200–300 × 2–4 mm, glaucous, flat, ribbed, sometimes involute, upper surface glabrous, or with occasional 1 mm long hairs, undersides densely hairy, lamina margin prickle-toothed, occasionally with sparse hairs up to 1 mm long. **Culms** 0.5–1 m, erect, nodes conspicuous, black or red-brown. **Inflorescences** 180–250 mm, stiff, erect, of 3–7 spreading spikelets. **Spikelets** 30–50 mm, each with 6–12 (or more) florets. **Glumes** ± equal, 5–10 mm, 3-nerved, acute or shortly awned, margins papery, ciliate. **Lemma** 10–14 mm, glabrous with some prickle-teeth above, apex occasionally bifid, awn 22–45 mm, recurved or straight. **Palea** 6–13 mm, apex bifid. **Rachilla** 2–3 mm, short stiff hairy. **Callus** 0.75 mm, incompletely and shortly bearded. **Anthers** 4–9 mm purple or yellow.



## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

### Key to the grasses of New Zealand

#### SIMILAR TAXA

Morphologically superficially similar to *Connorochloa tenuis*, from which it differs by the erect culms rather than long trailing culms, with the uppermost internodes short, spikelets widely spreading (divergent) from rachis, and 4–9 mm long, purple to yellow anthers. *Anthosachne aprica* is a stout grass with conspicuous erect flower heads bearing long-awned spikes that are held at a distinct angle to the stem. Aside from *Connorochloa* it could possibly be confused with some exotic *Bromus* spp. that also have long awns (but these often have hairy leaves, and green rather than blue-green coloured spikes, and the edges of the spikes are sharply delineated, not rounded as in *Anthosachne*. This species previously regarded as an *Elymus* is now accepted as a member of *Anthosachne* (see Barksworth & Jacobs (2011)).

#### FLOWERING

October–February.

#### FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, Yellow

#### FRUITING

November–April

#### LIFE CYCLE

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

#### PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed and the division of whole plants. Dislikes humidity and does best in full sun, in a well drained soil.

#### THREATS

A local endemic, 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.

#### ETYMOLOGY

**aprica:** From the Latin aperire 'open', meaning uncovered

#### WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

#### ATTRIBUTION

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

#### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Barkworth 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.

#### NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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#### MORE INFORMATION

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