

Bromus catharticus

COMMON NAMES

prairie grass

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Robust tufted grass with densely pubescent sheaths; compressed glabrous spikelets with awns to 3 mm long; can be invasive in natural ecosystems (e.g., in grasslands, wetland margins, dunes).

SIMILAR TAXA

Other *Bromus* species, but prairie grass is more robust than any other common species except *B. inermis*, which has glabrous or near-glabrous stem sheaths and very short or absent awns on the spikelets.

DISTRIBUTION

Widespread in New Zealand, cultivated and adventive

HABITAT

Pasture, road verges, waste areas, wetland edges

GENUS

Bromus

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Bromus catharticus Vahl

SYNONYMS

Bromus willdenowii, *Bromus unioloides*

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Seed

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

UPL: Obligate Upland

Rarely is a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

bromus: From the ancient Greek word bromos, referring to a kind of oat



leaf base, sheath and ligule; Whanganui. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Date taken: 21/04/2019, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Spikelets; Whanganui. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Date taken: 23/11/2011, Licence: CC BY-NC.

NVS CODE

BROCAT

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/bromus-catharticus/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026