

Chionochloa crassiuscula subsp. directa

COMMON NAMES

snow tussock

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPS, RR

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Short, slender, tussock with long prostrate stems forming large patches. **Leaves** shining, smooth, mostly straight, acute, deciduous, leaving many imbricate old sheaths. **Leaf-sheath** to 100 mm, glabrous, often reddish, shining above, darkened below, sometimes purpled or reddened, persistent, entire, compressed, sometimes apical tuft of hairs to 1 mm. **Ligule** 0.25 mm long. **Leaf-blade** to 250 × 3 mm, keeled, drawn out into long tapering, thin, straight, often somewhat twisting, pointed apex pungent, conduplicate, disarticulating at ligule, underside glabrous except for prickle-teeth towards apex, adaxially papillate but with some prickle-teeth especially near ligule; margin thickened, long hairs below or sometimes with prickle-teeth. **Culm** to 500 mm, often purpled, internodes glabrous. **Inflorescence** to 150 mm, open, pulvinate; spikelets often paired on flexuous branches; rachis, branches and pedicels with mixed long and short hairs or rachis hairy on margins only. **Spikelets** of up to 7 golden florets. **Glumes** thin, purpled, acute or mucronate from between teeth or aristate to erose, greater than or equal to adjacent lemma lobes; lower to 12 mm, shortly 1–3-nerved, glabrous, upper to 16 mm, 5–7-nerved, margin often long hairy below otherwise glabrous. **Lemma** to 5.5 mm, shining; densely hairy only on margin and aside central nerve, < sinus; lateral lobes to 6.5 mm including awn to 3 mm, or triangular-acute or long acute; central awn to 12 mm slightly twisting and markedly reflexed from flat column to 2 mm. **Palea** to 7 mm. **Callus** to 1 mm, hairs to 2.5 mm. **Rachilla** to 1.5 mm. **Lodicules** to 2 mm. **Anthers** to 4 mm. **Ovary** to 0.75 mm; stigma-styles to 3.5 mm. **Seed** to 3 mm.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Southland (Longwood Range, Takitimu and Hunter Mountains).

HABITAT

Upper montane to alpine in short scrub, or within poorly drained or boggy grasslands. Often locally dominant.

THREATS

Not threatened. Listed because it is a naturally uncommon, regional endemic.

GENUS

Chionochloa

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Chionochloa crassiuscula subsp. directa Connor

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1991)

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes



ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October–January

FRUITING

December–May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Often difficult. Can be grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces but tend to be very slow growing. Prefers a permanently damp, acidic soil and semi-shade. Plants must never be allowed to dry out.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

chionochloa: Snow grass

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

NVS CODE

CHICSD

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 42$

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Edgar E, Connor HE. 2000. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Christchurch, Manaaki Whenua Press. 650 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000).

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/chionochloa-crassiuscula-subsp-directa/>

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