

Ehrharta villosa

COMMON NAMES

pyp grass

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Strongly rhizomatous perennial grass to 1.5 m tall. **Stems** cane-like, erect. **Leaves** short, rolled. **Seedhead** a slender panicle, 10–20 cm long. **Seeds** purplish.

SIMILAR TAXA

It is the only strongly rhizomatous *Ehrharta* species in New Zealand.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Short tussockland, herbfield, bare land, wetland, mainly on coastline, sand dunes.

GENUS

Ehrharta

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Ehrharta villosa (L.f.) Schult. et Schult.f.

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October, November, December, January

FRUITING

Spring–summer

YEAR NATURALISED

1990

ORIGIN

Sth Africa

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Agricultural

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial.

ETYMOLOGY

villosa: From Latin (*villus*) meaning shaggy or hairy.



Pyp grass covering foreground dune, Koitiata (Turakina Beach), Oct 1990. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Inflorescence. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord. The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

NVS CODE

EHRVIL

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ehrharta-villosa/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026