

Festuca novae-zelandiae

COMMON NAMES

fescue tussock, hard tussock

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

GENUS

Festuca

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Festuca novae-zelandiae (Hack.) Cockayne

SYNONYMS

Festuca ovina subsp. *matthewsii* Hack.; *Festuca ovina* var. *novae-zelandiae* (Hack.) Cheeseman; *Festuca ovina* subsp. *novae-zelandiae* var. *eu-novae-zelandiae* Howarth; *Festuca ovina* subsp. *novae-zelandiae* var. *novae-zelandiae* subvar. *novae-zelandiae*; *Festuca ovina* subsp. *novae-zelandiae* var. *novae-zelandiae* subvar. *pruinosa* Howarth

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

UPL: Obligate Upland

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

CULTIVATION

Commonly sold by retail plant nurseries, often erroneously as *Carex novae-zelandiae*.

ETYMOLOGY

festuca: From the Latin *festuca* 'stem' or 'blade of grass'

novae-zelandiae: Of New Zealand

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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



Long Gully, Wanaka. Photographer: John Barkla, Date taken: 01/03/2013, Licence: CC BY.



Festuca novaezelandiae. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

NVS CODE

FESNOV

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/festuca-novae-zelandiae/>

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