

Juncus bulbosus

COMMON NAMES

bulbous rush

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Low-growing leafy rush to 25 cm tall (more than this in aquatic plants), leaves very fine, usually swollen at the leaf base, submerged leaves are fine and thread-like, up to 1 m long, plant often reddish with branched flowerheads made up of many small clusters of 2–6 yellow-brown flowers/capsules (fruit), but often clusters of leaves can be found on these flowers.

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Green

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Low-growing, variable perennial rush, 5–15 cm high, densely tufted or with prostrate rooting stems with leafy tufts at nodes, often mat-forming or submerged. **Stems** usually reddish-tinged, slender, swollen at base, rooting at nodes. **Leaves** tiny and bristle-like (narrow, grass-like on floating and submerged plants), with distinct hollow compartments separated by partitions. **Inflorescence** terminal, variable, unbranched and few flowered or branched and open, occ with tufts of bristly leaves.

Flowers tiny, green to brown. **Seed capsules** 2–3 mm long, yellowish-brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

No other introduced rushes have the clumped filamentous leaves, swelling at the nodes, proliferous flower heads. In aquatic habitats the leaves are longer and more grass-like and may be confused with *J. bufonius*, but the stems swollen at the base and the septa (cross wall) visible in the leaves distinguish *J. bulbosus* from *J. bufonius*. The native *Juncus novae-zelandiae* is superficially similar but has black capsules and lacks the leafy proliferous heads.

DISTRIBUTION

Widespread and common throughout.

HABITAT

Mostly peaty sites in wet pastures, water body margins, drains and wetlands, sometimes submerged.

GENUS

Juncus

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus bulbosus L.



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SYNONYMS

Verojuncus bulbosus (L.) Záveská Drábková & Pročków

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Subgenus *Juncus*, Section *Ozophyllum* (Septati) Kirschner (2002: Juncaceae 2)

Pročków et al. (2023) proposed a taxonomic segregation of *Juncus* into six genera based on molecular and morphological evidence. Whilst it has long been recognised that the current circumscription of *Juncus* includes morphologically divergent taxa—reflected in the recognition of numerous subgenera and sections—the consensus view of the NZPCN website taxonomy subcommittee, taking into consideration advice from Australian *Juncus* expert Dr Karen Wilson (NSW Herbarium) and others in Europe is that the generic segregations proposed need further consideration and testing. Accordingly, it has been decided to maintain the current broad circumscription of *Juncus*, but to include all new names as synonyms in factsheets. We thank, in particular, Dr Wilson for her helpful comments.

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Spring to early summer

FRUITING

Summer to autumn

YEAR NATURALISED

1896

ORIGIN

Eurasia and North Africa

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Rarely controlled, but can be controlled manually, mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seed dispersed by animals, water or contaminated machinery.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

juncus: From the Latin *jungere* 'to tie or bind', the stems of some species being used to make cord (Johnson and Smith)

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

JUNBUL

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Champion, P. et al. 2020. Freshwater Invasive Species of New Zealand 2020. NIWA publication.
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- Healy, A. J. 1982. Identification of weeds and clovers. New Zealand Weed and Pest Control Society Publication. Editorial Services Limited, Featherston. 299 p.
- Healy, A. J.; Edgar, E. 1980. Flora of New Zealand, Volume III. Adventive Cyperaceous, Petalous and Spathaceous Monocotyledons. Government Printer, Wellington. 220 p.
- Johnson, P. N.; Brooke, P. A. 1989. Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319 p.
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- Kirschner, J. (compiler) (2002). Juncaceae 2: *Juncus* subg. *Juncus*, Species Plantarum: Flora of the World Part 7: 1–336.
- Pročków, J., Záveská Drábková, L. 2023. A revision of the Juncaceae with delimitation of six new genera: nomenclatural changes in *Juncus*. *Phytotaxa* 622(1): 17–41.

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description from Healy and Edgar (1980).

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/juncus-bulbosus/>

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