

Juncus conglomeratus

COMMON NAMES

soft rush

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Upright clump-forming leafless rush to 80 cm tall, with tall cylindrical stems, with tightly clustered spherical flowerheads near the end of each stem, made up of many red-brown flowers/capsules (fruit).

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect clumps; rhizomes short. **Stems** 30–80 cm × 1.5–3 mm, soft and easily split, grey-green, dull, prominently ridged especially just below inflorescence, pith continuous, cobwebby. **Basal sheaths** brownish-red, not shining. **Inflorescence** a ± spherical head c. 1 cm long, base of subtending floral bract conspicuously red-tinged and expanded to a wide opening through which inflorescence emerges. **Flowers** very crowded. **Tepals** 2–2.5 mm long, ± equal, acuminate. **Stamens** 3. **Capsule** c. 2 mm long, ± = tepals, ovoid-oblong, flattened at top, reddish-brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to other tall leafless rushes, but has a dense single flower cluster, with an expanded floral bract behind it and conspicuous ridges on the stem beneath the inflorescence.

DISTRIBUTION

Tasman to Southland.

HABITAT

Lake margins, roadside drains and wet pasture.

GENUS

Juncus

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus conglomeratus L.

SYNONYMS

Agathryon conglomeratum (L.) Závěská Drábková & Pročková



Juncus conglomeratus. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



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TAXONOMIC NOTES

Subgenus *Agathyron*, Section *Juncotypus* (Genuini) Kirschner (2002: Juncaceae 3)
Proćków 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

1930

ORIGIN

Europe, Western Asia Northwestern Africa and North America

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not controlled in New Zealand.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seed dispersed by animals, water or contaminated machinery.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found 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)

NVS CODE

JUNCON

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Champion et al. 2012. Freshwater Pests of New Zealand. NIWA publication.

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Johnson P. N., Brooke P. A. 1989. Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

Johnson, A. T. and Smith, H. A. 1986. Plant Names Simplified: Their pronunciation, derivation and meaning. Landsman Bookshop Ltd, Buckenhill, UK.

Kirschner, J. (compiler) 2002. Juncaceae 3: *Juncus* subg. *Agathryon*, Species Plantarum: Flora of the World Part 8: 1–192.

Proćków, J., Závěská 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). Feature description from Healy and Edgar (1980).

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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