

# Juncus effusus var. effusus

## COMMON NAME

soft rush

## FAMILY

Juncaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Juncus effusus* L. var. *effusus*

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

## NVS CODE

JUNEVE

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Upright clump-forming leafless rush to 1.2 tall, with tall, soft\*, cylindrical stems, with continuous pith. The open clustered flowerheads near the end of each stem are made up of many light brown flowers/capsules (fruit). \*Stems squash much more easily between thumb and fingers than most other 'leafless' rushes.

## DISTRIBUTION

Widespread and common throughout.

## HABITAT

Wet pasture and a wide range of wet habitats, including peaty areas.

## FEATURES

Dense tuft-forming rush with short rhizomes. Stems 30-120 cm x 1.5-3 mm, cylindrical, bright or yellow-green, softer than most similar spp, easily split or compressed, smooth, shining; with continuous, cobwebby pith. No true leaves, only reddish-brown basal sheaths, closely held to stem. Seedhead not at end of stem, with many tiny green flowers along short, downward-curving branchlets. Seed capsule 2-3 mm long, oval, light brown.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to other tall leafless rushes, but has an open inflorescence with the lower branches decumbent and cobwebby continuous pith in the stem. The soft, easily compressed and broken stems are distinct.

## FLOWERING

Spring to early summer

## FLOWER COLOURS

Brown

## FRUITING

Summer to autumn

## LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by animals, water or contaminated machinery.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1864



*Juncus effusus*. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Lake Wiritoa. Jan 2009. Photographer: Colin Ogle

## ORIGIN

Europe, Asia and Africa

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant.

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

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

## ETYMOLOGY

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

## NOTES ON TAXONOMY

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

## ATTRIBUTION

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

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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Johnson PN, Brooke PA (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.

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

<http://www.niwa.co.nz/freshwater-and-estuaries/management-tools/identification-guides-and-fact-sheets/freshwater-pest-species>

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

Healy, A.J. (1982). *Identification of weeds and clovers*. New Zealand Weed and Pest Control Society Publication. Editorial Services Limited, Featherston. 299pp.

## MORE INFORMATION

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