

Juncus kraussii subsp. australiensis

COMMON NAME

sea rush

SYNONYMS

Juncus maritimus var. *australiensis* Buchenau

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus kraussii subsp. *australiensis* (Buchenau) Snogerup

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. North, South and Chatham Islands. From Te Pahi to the Okarito in the west and Dunedin in the South. Inland in the North Island at Lake Rotorua, at Orakeikorako, and in the South Island at Mesopotamia, Rangitata River

HABITAT

Primarily coastal where it is found in salt marshes, brackish stream, lagoon and river margins, estuaries. Also inland around geothermal vents at Lake Rotorua and Orakeikorako, and inland at the headwaters of the Rangitata River.

FEATURES

Dense to loosely tufted, dark brown to brownish-black, perennial herb. Rhizome 5-8 mm diameter, horizontal sparingly branched. Flowering stems 0.3-1.2 m tall, 1.5-3.0 mm diameter, rather distant along rhizome, rigid, terete, light to dark yellow-brown, dark brown or brownish-black; internal pith continuous; basal bracts stiff, acute, red-brown, upper ones obviously larger, broader and mucronate. Leaves 1-2, terete, bright green, sheathing at base, similar to the stems but shorter. Inflorescence apparently lateral, open, irregularly-branched, branchlets numerous, rigid, almost equaling the pungent sheathing bract. Flowers 3 mm long, clustered at the branchlet apices; tepals rigidly stiff, red-brown, midrib green to light brown. Stamens 3 perfect, 3 aborted, rarely with 1 or more of the usually aborted inner ring functional; anthers twice as long as filaments. Capsule slightly > tepals, dark brown to almost black, ovoid, shining, mucronate.



Kennedy Bay. March. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Kennedy Bay. March. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

SIMILAR TAXA

Most likely to be found growing with *Juncus acutus* L., an aggressive, introduced species with sharp-tipped bracts above the flower heads; *J. kraussii* differs in having open rather than densely compact inflorescence; flowers in small rather than large, compact clusters; and dark brown rather than red-brown capsules which are more or less equal to, rather than > in length to the tepals.

FLOWERING

September - December

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Red/Pink

FRUITING

November - April

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and division of whole plants. An attractive species ideal in rock gardens and one that should be used more widely in coastal plantings, especially bordering saltmarshes.

ETYMOLOGY

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

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (1 September 2006). Description based on Moore & Edgar (1970).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Johnson, A. T. and Smith, H. A (1986). *Plant Names Simplified: Their pronunciation, derivation and meaning*.

Landsman Bookshop Ltd: Buckenhill, UK.

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: *Flora of New Zealand*. Vol. I. Government Printer, Wellington.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora.

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NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/juncus-kraussii-subsp-australiensis/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/juncus-kraussii-subsp-australiensis/>