

Juncus prismatocarpus

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus prismatocarpus R.Br.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

JUNPRI

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. North and South Island. In the South Island uncommon, and known only from scattered sites in Nelson and Westland. Present in Australia, the Philippines, Japan, China, India and Sri Lanka

HABITAT

Coastal to montane (1000 m a.s.l.). Usually in lowland wetland habitats or in poorly drained soils in open scrub and gumland scrub. Often on the sunny margins of damp tracksides, or present in building sites on recently cleared clay.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).



Coromandel, March. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Coromandel, March. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

FEATURES

Glabrous, annual or short-lived perennial, herb forming bright green to yellow green, erect, loosely tufted patches. Stems more or less compressed, rarely terete, 90-800 x 2-4 mm, most erect, rarely shortly creeping and rooting at these base from the nodes. Leaves numerous, basal and cauline, 80-420 x 2-5 mm, rarely overtopping stems; lamina linear-lanceolate to lanceolate, compressed but hollow, longitudinally multitubular, each tube transversely septate, leaf apex acute, occasionally weakly dilated; sheath broad and loose, with membranous margins and two obtuse auricles. Inflorescence a terminal, much branched cyme with globular bright green to rust-coloured fascicles of 6-18 flowers at the ends of the spreading branchlets; subtending leaves 1-2, foliaceous, < inflorescence, septate. Flowers 3-4 mm long; tepals acuminate, more or less equal, occasionally with the outer tepals shorter, greenish brown or red, membranous, margins very narrow. Stamens 3 about one half the length of the tepals. Capsule 4.5-5.0 x 1.0-1.5 mm, rust- or straw-coloured, usually much < tepals, triquetrous, ovate-lanceolate, gradually narrowed to a mucronate tip.

SIMILAR TAXA

Easily recognised by the bright green to yellow-green, more or less flat sword-like leaves which are multitubular with each individual tubular partition transversely septate (easily seen if the leaf is held to the light). It is most often confused with *Juncus fockei* Buchenau and *J. holoschoenus* R.Br. Both species differ from *J. prismatocarpus* by having unitubular terete leaves whose transverse septate extended across the entire leaf width, and by their flowers which have six rather than three stamens.

FLOWERING

August - March

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Green

FRUITING

October - May

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. The inflorescences often proliferate. Prefers permanently damp ground in full sun but will tolerate shade. Can be invasive.

THREATS

Not Threatened but uncommon in the South Island

ETYMOLOGY

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

prismatocarpus: From the Latin *prismaticus* 'prism shaped', i.e. having several longitudinal angles and intermediate flat faces, and the Greek *carpus* 'fruit' or 'relating to fruit', meaning prism shaped fruit

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. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285-309

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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