

Juncus pusillus

COMMON NAME

dwarf rush

SYNONYMS

Juncus capillaceus Hook.f.

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus pusillus Buch.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

JUNPUS

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2018 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands from Bay of Plenty south.

HABITAT

Open, swampy ground, in cushion bogs and alongside tarn, lake and river margins. Coastal to alpine. Often associated with *Juncus novae-zelandiae* Hook.f.

FEATURES

Diminutive, delicate, red-brown to dark brown, perennial forming widely creeping tufted patches arising from an ascending rhizome 0.5 mm diameter. Stems 1-30 x 0.2-0.3 mm, leafy, creeping and rooting below, erect above. Leaves basal and cauline, usually > stems, up to 0.2 mm wide, filiform, striated, terete, septate; sheath membranous with two obtuse auricles. Inflorescence terminal, usually solitary flowered, rarely with 2-3 sessile flowers or comprised of two slender branches terminated by 2-3 flowers; subtending bract > inflorescence. Flowers 1.5-2.0 mm long, tepals equal, initially pale green, maturing reddish. Stamens 6, equal in length or > tepals. Capsule pale brown, slightly > tepals, narrowly ovoid, distinctly mucronate.



Herbarium specimen: AK 109060.

Photographed with permission of Auckland Institute and Museum. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe, photographed with permission of Auckland Institute and Museum



Waitutu. Photographer: Colin Ogle

SIMILAR TAXA

Most likely to be confused with *J. scheuchzerioides* Gaud. (with which it grows on the Auckland Islands) and *J. novae-zelandiae* Hook.f. From *J. scheuchzerioides* it differs by the terete rather than compressed red brown to brown rather than pale green, red-green to bright green leaves which are < rather than > 0.5 mm wide. Further it has flowers which are 1.5-3 rather than 4 mm long. From *J. novae-zelandiae* it differs by the light brown rather than lustrous black tipped mature capsules and stems which are less than the length of the leaves at maturity.

FLOWERING

October - January

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Red/Pink

FRUITING

December - May

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed and the division of whole plants. Very small, and best kept in a pot partially submerged in water.

ETYMOLOGY

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

pusillus: Insignificant or weak

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

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Juncus pusillus* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/juncus-pusillus/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

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