

Koeleria lasiorhachis

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)





CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stout, erect to somewhat lax, narrowly tufted, greyish green, glaucous to dull green grass 50–850 mm tall, sometimes rhizomatous, with pale straw-coloured leaf-sheaths. **Branching** extravaginal. **Leaf-sheath** to 60 mm long, pubescent. **Collar hairs** sparse, pilose, long. **Ligule** 0.3–0.8 mm, truncate, erose, glabrous or ciliate. **Leaf-blade** 50–250 × 1.3–3.0 mm, flat, rarely inrolled and narrower, often with scattered long pilose hairs, undersides prickle-toothed toward apex, upper surface ribbed with more or less scattered minute prickle-teeth or short hairs on ribs; margins minutely prickle-toothed, and often bearing scattered long pilose hairs. **Culm** 100–500 mm, internodes pilose above and below nodes, densely pilose, pubescent or glabrous towards panicle. **Panicle** 30–210 × 10–50 mm, lanceolate, usually open with visible rachis but spikelets clustered and individually inconspicuous; rachis, branches, and pedicels densely pilose to sparsely, minutely hairy. **Spikelets** 5–8 mm, pale green or purple-tinged. **Glumes** unequal, keels often strong, prickle-toothed in upper ½ or almost throughout; lower  –  length of upper narrow-oblong, tapered to an often long-acuminate apex, upper < spikelet, elliptic, acute to shortly acuminate; margins almost entire with very few prickle-teeth near apex. **Lemma** 5.0–7.5 mm, bicuspid, minutely prickle-toothed or papillate; awn 5.0–9.5 mm, straight to later recurved, insertion point in upper ½–⅓ of lemma. **Palea** minutely prickle-toothed on keels and margins. **Callus hairs** to 0.8 mm. **Rachilla hairs** to 2 mm. **Lodicules** c. 1.3 mm, glabrous. **Anthers** 1.8–22. mm. **Ovary** to 1 mm long; stigma-styles to 2.4 mm. **Seed** 2.5 × 0.8 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Closest to *Koeleria serpentina* with which it shares distinctly hairy culms and leaves. However, *K. lasiorhachis* does not grow on ultramafic substrates. While *K. serpentina* is characteristically reddish-green, *K. lasiorhachis* is green to grey-green. In *K. serpentina* the lemma is 3.0–4.5 mm long, the awns less than or equal to the lemma; the leaf-blade inrolled, < 1 mm diameter, only very rarely flat and up to 2 mm wide. In *K. lasiorhachis* the lemma is 5.0–7.5 mm long; the awn is much ≥ lemma; the leaf-blade is usually flat (rarely inrolled), and 1.3–3.3 mm wide. *K. lasiorhachis* is known only from the North Island, whereas *K. serpentina* occurs in both the North and South Islands,.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island only, mainly in subalpine to alpine portions of the Central North Island and adjacent main axial ranges. Also collected on Mt Pirongia, and in the past from near Waiuku and Mt Wellington, Auckland. It is now extinct at these last two locations.

HABITAT

Usually a montane to subalpine species (600–1500 m a.s.l.) but occasionally found at lower elevations. May be found growing in scrub, open forest, tussock grassland, along river and stream sides, and on rock outcrops.

GENUS

Koeleria

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Koeleria lasiorhachis (Hack) Barberá, Quintanar, Soreng et P.M.Peterson

SYNONYMS

Trisetum antarcticum var. *lasiorhachis* Hack.; *Trisetum lasiorhachis* (Hack.) Edgar

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November–February

FRUITING

January–May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed and rooted pieces but will not thrive in humid climates. Does best in damp soil, in a cool spot with plenty of air movement.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ETYMOLOGY

koeleria: Named after George Ludwig Koeler (1765-1807), 18th century German botanist. Author of a work on the grasses of Germany and France, *Descriptio graminum in Gallia et Germania* (1802).

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to the grasses of New Zealand](#)

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 28$

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Data Deficient Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the [“Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland”](#) Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Edgar E, Connor HE. 2000. *Flora of New Zealand*. Vol. V. Grasses. Manaaki Whenua Press, Christchurch, NZ. 650 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000).

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/koeleria-lasiorhachis/>

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