

Koeleria tenella

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (North-west Nelson and Marlborough, then from Arthur's Pass and Banks Peninsula south and west to Fiordland).

HABITAT

Usually in stony ground, on moraines, scree river beds, slip scars, on marble, limestone and ultramafic rocks, often in tussock grassland, fellfield and herbfield. Sometimes in seepages and swampy ground.

GENUS

Koeleria

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Koeleria tenella (Petrie) Barberá, Quintanar, Soreng et P.M.Peterson

SYNONYMS

Trisetum antarcticum subsp. *tenellum* Petrie, *T. antarcticum* var. *tenellum* (Petrie) Cheeseman; *Trisetum tenellum* (Petrie) A.W.Hill

TAXONOMIC NOTES

A rather variable species, with two cytotypes. Further study into the morphological variability and distribution of these cytotypes is needed.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh material and division of whole plants. Does best in a shady site in free draining, lime-enriched soil or within a pot.

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).

tenella: Delicate

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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



Trisetum tenellum inflorescence.

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Trisetum tenellum. Photographer: Kerry Ford, Licence: All rights reserved.

NVS CODE

TRITEN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28, 56

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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25 May 2026