

Lachnagrostis littoralis subsp. littoralis

COMMON NAME

coastal wind grass

SYNONYMS

Deyeuxia forsteri var. *littoralis* Hack. comb. illeg., var. epithet legit.,
Lachnagrostis filiformis var. *littoralis* (Hack.) Zotov

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Lachnagrostis littoralis (Hack.) Edgar subsp. *littoralis*

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 56$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

.Endemic. Common in coastal habitats throughout the North Island, northern South Island and Chatham Islands

HABITAT

Strictly coastal. Usually on exposed cliff faces, in coastal turf, and amongst boulders or on cobble beaches. Occasionally found in petrel scrub or in damp depressions within sand dune systems. Rarely found in estuaries on mud banks or amongst saltmarsh vegetation.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Densely tufted, light green to greyish green or glaucous, annual grass 30–400 mm tall, whole plant often withering early and culms not breaking up below panicle. **Branching** intravaginal. **Leaf-sheath** finely striate, subhyaline, smooth or minutely scabrid above. **Ligule** 0.2–3.0 mm, oblong, tapered, subobtusate or denticulate, sometimes lacerate, undersides sparsely scabrid. **Leaf-blade** firm 10–80 × 1.5–5 mm, flat, or sometimes involute and 0.5 mm diameter, underside smooth or minutely papillose, rarely scabrid, upper surface minutely scabrid on ribs and margins, leaf tip acute to subobtusate. **Culm** 10–140 mm, included within leaf-sheaths, internodes finely scabrid below panicle, rarely visible until culm breaks up at maturity. **Panicle** 20–120 × 5–85 mm, delicate, ± contracted, later spreading, enclosed at base by sheath of uppermost culm-leaf; branches and branchlets ± erect, all ± equal in length, slender, sparsely scabrid, naked for much of their length, the ultimate branchlets tipped by 1–2 spikelets. **Spikelets** 2.5–6.0 mm, light green or greenish brown, slender. **Glumes** narrow elliptic-lanceolate, usually equal or the upper slightly shorter, acute to acuminate to shortly mucronate, 1-nerved, smooth, keel scabrid, margins hyaline, finely scabrid above. **Lemma** 1.5–2.5 mm long, oblong-ovate, 5-nerved with scattered to rather dense short silky hairs, often glabrous above, lateral nerves shortly excurrent, faintly scabrid; awn 3–6 mm long, ± mid-dorsal, geniculate, slightly twisted near base. **Palea** slightly < lemma, nerves 0.1–0.2 mm apart, keels minutely excurrent, faintly scabrid at apex. **Callus** hairs dense, very short, to 0.5 mm long covering 20% of lemma. **Rachilla prolongation** minute 0.2–1.0 mm, with hair tuft 0.5–1.5 mm long. **Lodicules** 0.7 mm long, linear, acute. **Anthers** 0.3–1.0 mm. **Seed** 1.0–1.5 × 0.4–0.7 mm.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to the grasses of New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *Lachnagrostis littoralis* subsp. *salaria* Edgar by the geniculate rather than curved awn, and generally smaller size. *Lachnagrostis littoralis* subsp. *salaria* is confined to the eastern South Island (from North Canterbury south) and Stewart Island. It is also a much coarser grass than subsp. *littoralis*. From *L. filiformis* it differs by the ± equal lengths of the naked primary and secondary panicle branches, and by the lemma usually 1.8–3.0 mm (cf. 1.3–2.0 mm long in *L. filiformis*) and anthers 0.4–0.7 rather than 0.2–0.5 mm long. *Lachnagrostis littoralis* subsp. *littoralis* further differs from *L. filiformis* in that it is strictly coastal and usually a much smaller, more delicate, annual grass.

FLOWERING

September–May

FRUITING

October–June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. Can become invasive.

THREATS

Not Threatened but can be uncommon over parts of its range.

ETYMOLOGY

lachnagrostis: From “lachne” (wool) referring to the distinctive callus hairs of this genus and “agrostis” by which Trinius (1820) actually meant “a grass” (not an Agrostis). So the generic name means “a hairy (woolly) grass” not “a hairy (woolly) Agrostis” as is often incorrectly stated (see Gardner 2014).

littoralis: From the Latin littus ‘shore’, meaning shore-loving or growing on the shore

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Some Kermadec islands plants attributed to this species warrant further study as they appear intermediate between *L. littoralis* and *L. pilosa*.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April June 2005. Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Edgar E, Connor HE. 2000. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Manaaki Whenua Press, Christchurch, NZ. 650 p.
- Gardner, RO. 2014. Notes on the wind grass *Lachnagrostis filiformis* (Poaceae). *Auckland Botanical Society Journal* 69: 168–170.
- Trinius CB. 1820. *Fundamenta Agrostographiae*. J.G.Huebner, Vienna.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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