

# Lachnagrostis striata

## COMMON NAMES

purple wind grass

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tufted, usually fine-leaved, low growing, tufted, bright green to red-green annual to short-lived perennial grass 50–400 mm tall. **Branching**

extravaginal. **Leaf-sheath** membranous, sparsely ribbed, smooth, rarely minutely scabrid, green to light brown. **Ligule** 1.0–5.5 mm long, more or less oblong, sometimes slightly tapered, denticulate, undersides sparsely prickle-toothed. **Leaf-blade** 10–100 × 0.6–2.0 mm, usually folded, so appearing narrower, undersides smooth except near apex, upper surface scabrid on prominent ribs, margins scabrid; apex subobtuse. **Culm** 15–300 mm long, erect or ascending, longer culms often projecting beyond uppermost sheaths, internodes minutely, retrorsely scabrid.

**Panicle** 20–200 × 15–120 mm, delicate, rather contracted at first, becoming lax; branches filiform, finely scabrid, tipped by 1–few spikelets.

**Spikelets** 2.0–3.5 mm, green or purplish, sometimes purple-red. **Glumes** subequal, acute, scabrid on mid-nerve in upper half or almost throughout, hyaline margins with a very few prickle-teeth near apex; lower slightly longer, linear-lanceolate, upper elliptic-lanceolate. **Lemma** 1.2–2.3 mm,

— $\frac{3}{4}$  the length of glumes, usually densely covered by stiff, straight hairs, ovate-oblong, truncate, lateral nerves scarcely excurrent; awn

0.2–3.0 mm, mostly straight, rarely geniculate, very fine, often purple, emanating from upper  $\frac{1}{3}$  of lemma. **Palea** two-thirds to about the same length as the lemma, keels 0.1 mm apart, slightly excurrent, apex minutely bifid, sparsely prickle-toothed. **Callus** ringed with short hairs to 0.3 mm, about  $\frac{1}{4}$  length of lemma. **Rachilla prolongation** 0.5 mm long, tipped by equally long, or slightly longer hairs. **Lodicules** 0.3 mm, linear, acute.

**Anthers** 0.2–0.6 mm long. **Seed** 0.8–1.4 × 0.4–0.6 mm.

## SIMILAR TAXA

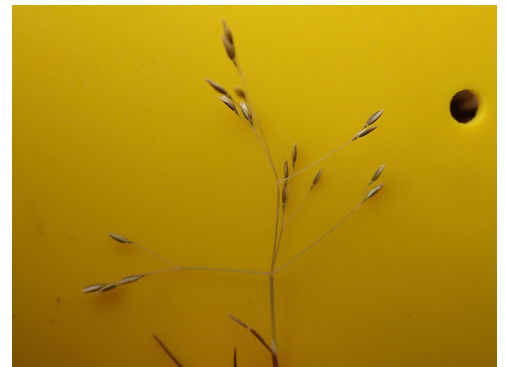
One of a group of species with mostly straight or curved awns (though in this species they can be geniculate); extravaginal branching and with initially contracted panicles which later open and whose ultimate branches often bear two or three spikelets towards the apex; and whose lemma is 1.2–2.5 mm long. It is distinguished from *L. uda* Edgar and *L. glabra* (Petrie) Edgar, which also have these features, by the densely hairy lemma and by the anthers which are usually 0.2–0.5 mm long. *Lachnagrostis striata* is a lowland to montane species, often of river, lake, pond or tarn margins, while *L. glabra* is strictly coastal and usually associated with salt marshes and mud flats and *L. uda* is a species of alpine seepages and mires.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. In the North Island scattered from Auckland south, common on the Volcanic Plateau. South Island, locally common in the east but abundant in Fiordland.



Mackenzie Basin. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 29/03/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mackenzie Basin. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 29/03/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## HABITAT

Lowland to montane. Usually found on lake and tarn margins (especially in turfs), on river banks and in damp seepages within tussock grassland.

## GENUS

Lachnagrostis

## FAMILY

Poaceae

## AUTHORITY

Lachnagrostis striata (Colenso) Zotov

## SYNONYMS

Agrostis striata Colenso, Deyeuxia forsteri var. humilior Hack. comb. illeg., var. epithet legit.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

September–April

## FRUITING

October–June

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. Usually an annual or short-lived grass which readily self-sows and can become invasive.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## 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).

**striata**: Striated

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to the grasses of New Zealand

## NVS CODE

LACSTR

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 84

## 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 Threatened – Regionally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, RR 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.

## 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.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (27 June 2005). Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000)

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## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/lachnagrostis-striata/>

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026