

Nassella neesiana

COMMON NAME

Chilean needle grass

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Nassella neesiana (Trin. et Rupr.) Barkworth

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

NASNEE

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not assessed

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

FEATURES

Erect, tussocky, tufted perennial grass to 1 m tall (prostrate with dense horizontal tillers where heavily grazed). Stem base swollen. Leaves yellowish-green, 400 x 1-5 mm (rolled when in drought), margins rough and bristly. Leaf collar has tufts of erect hairs on both sides. Ligule short, membranous. Seedheads of 2 types: large, drooping, open, harsh, purplish, turning silver; and small, hidden in leaf sheaths (appear as swellings in stem above node). Seed 8-10 mm long, narrow, bristly, sharply pointed, with 60-80 mm twisted hair-like awn, Nov-Dec.

SIMILAR TAXA

Schedonorus phoenix is siliar in growth but *N. neesiana* has narrower leaves and the spear-like attachment on the seed is distinctive.

FLOWERING

November, December

YEAR NATURALISED

1940

ORIGIN

S. America

Reason For Introduction

Ornamental.

Life Cycle Comments

Perennial. seeds are >90% viable and survive for several years in the soil and germinate in autumn and spring.

Dispersal

Restricted distribution due to a lack of wind dispersal; localised spread occurs through seed being transported by stock, in hay, on clothing, by machinery and in water.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/nassella-neesiana/>

