

Nassella trichotoma

COMMON NAME

nassella tussock

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Nassella trichotoma (Nees) Arechav.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

NASTRI

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Caespitose perennial with shoots swollen and white at base, and open purplish panicle, branching intravaginal. **Sheath** to 5 cm, scabrid near ligule and on upper margins, becoming glabrous below. **Ligule** to 1.5 mm, decurrent, symmetrical or asymmetrical, rounded or apiculate, short-hairy or scabrid. **Leaf-blade** to 35 cm × 0.5 mm diam., inrolled, appearing terete, very stiff, acicular, abaxially antrorsely scabrid, adaxially clothed in short dense hairs; margins smooth. **Culm** to 70 cm, glabrous except for hairs above and below nodes. **Panicle** to 25 cm, open, much-branched, drooping, at maturity readily detaching with culm and blowing freely; rachis, branches and pedicels scabrid. **Glumes** nearly equal, 5–8 mm, deeply purple-suffused, 3-nerved, produced into awn approx. 2 mm, nerves and margins stiff-hairy. **Lemma** to 2.5 mm, 5-nerved, gibbous, tubercular-scabrid except on margin, lobes short, apiculate; coma present; awn tardily caducous to 35 mm, weakly 1-geniculate, short stiff-hairy, column loosely twisted, to 15 mm, arista to 20 mm. **Palea** approx. 1 mm, completely enclosed by lemma, glabrous, hyaline, weakly bifid at apex. **Callus** to 0.3mm, blunt, hairs to 1.5 mm. **Lodicules** 2, to 1 mm in chasmogamous flowers, to 0.6mm in cleistogamous flowers. **Anthers** penicillate, in chasmogamous flowers to 2 mm; in cleistogamous flowers 1 fertile anther to 0.7 mm, and 2 aborted anthers to 0.3mm. (Edgar & Connor, 2000)

SIMILAR TAXA

Finely serrated leaves give a rough feeling to the leaves. Fine feathery panicle with a purplish tinge.

FLOWERING

October, November, December

FRUITING

October-December

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Reproduces by seed only. Dispersed by wind, up to 16 km from the mother plant. The seeds, aided by the roughened seed coat and the tufts of hairs at the base, also cling to wool, bags, clothing etc. Seeds are also spread on machinery, in hay, mud and the droppings of animals.

YEAR NATURALISED

1931

ORIGIN

S. America



REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Accidental

NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord. The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

MORE INFORMATION

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