

# Poa foliosa

## COMMON NAME

muttonbird poa

## SYNONYMS

*Festuca foliosa* Hook.f.; *Poa foliosa* (Hook.f.) Hook.f. var. *foliosa*; *Festuca foliosa* var. *â* Hook.f.

## FAMILY

Poaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Poa foliosa* (Hook.f.) Hook.f.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## NVS CODE

POAFOL

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: Stewart Island/Rakiura (north-eastern Titi Islands), Solander Island, Antipodes Islands, Auckland Islands, Campbell Island, and Macquarie Island (Australian Territory but part of the New Zealand Botanical region).

## HABITAT

Coastal, usually near sea bird nesting grounds, often on steep slopes, sometimes in turf near shore.



*Poa foliosa*. Photographer: Alan Stewart, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Enderby Island. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dioecious, robust, green tussocks up to 1.5 m tall, arising from short, narrow, woody stolons, with shoots covered at base by abundant fibrous remnants of sheaths. **Branching** extravaginal; leaf-blades persistent. **Leaf-sheath** light brown, coriaceous, glabrous, closely striate, keel prominent above. **Ligule** 1–3 mm, apically glabrous, entire, rounded, abaxially finely scabrid. **Leaf-blade** 150–500 × 1–6 mm, coriaceous, tough, flat, abaxially smooth with prominent midrib and many lateral ribs, adaxially short-scabrid, bearing two prominent ridges along centre; margins thickened, smooth, tip entire, smooth, semi-pungent. **Culm** 200–600 mm, internodes glabrous. **Panicle** 100–250 mm, dense, with all branches, except the longer ones, bearing spikelets almost to base; rachis and branches mostly smooth. **Spikelets** 5.5–9.0 mm, 3–6-flowered, light greenish brown. **Glumes** subequal, long-acuminate, membranous, except for thickened nerves, smooth, but with a few prickly-teeth on nerves above and occasionally on margins; lower 3–6 mm, 1–3-nerved, narrow-lanceolate, upper 4.0–6.5 mm, 3-nerved, narrow elliptic-lanceolate. **Lemma** 5–7 mm, 5-nerved, acute or with midnerve very shortly excurrent, scabrid except near base, midnerve ciliate to more than halfway, outer lateral nerves, internerves, and margins with minute hairs in lower ⅓. **Palea** 3.5–4.5 mm, keel rather densely ciliate-scabrid, interkeel and flanks with sparse minute hairs and prickly-teeth. **Callus** with large tuft of crinkled hairs just below midnerve of lemma. **Rachilla** c. 0.5 mm, glabrous. **Lodicules** 0.4–0.7 mm, rarely hair-tipped. **Dioecious**: male with anthers 2.0–3.3 mm, gynoeceum 0; female with pollen-sterile anthers c. 0.6–1.0 mm, often on long filaments; stigma-styles c. 2 mm. **Seed** 2 mm; rarely perfect.

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to the grasses of New Zealand

## SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to *Poa tennantiana* Petrie which is a superficially similar southern New Zealand robust grass of coastal areas, especially near sea bird nesting grounds. *Poa tennantiana* differs from *P. foliosa* by its monoecious rather than dioecious habit, yellow-green rather than green leaves, by the lower leaf-sheaths scabrid between the nerves, rather than smooth, and by the glabrous rather than hairy (hairs crinkly in a prominent tuft) callus.

## FLOWERING

October–December

## FRUITING

November–April

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces. Dislikes humidity and will not flower or thrive in warm climates.

## THREATS

Not Threatened. Listed because it is a narrow range, offshore island endemic. It is abundant in its known locations with no obvious threats.

## ETYMOLOGY

**poa**: Meadow grass

**foliosa**: Leafy

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## ATTRIBUTION

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.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/poa-foliosa/>