

Rytidosperma thomsonii

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DPS

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Recognition in the field: a medium stature *Rytidosperma* with erect culms, crowded dark spikes and florets with very short awn. The hairs on the lemma are only in two tufts on the margin.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to larger plants of *Rytidosperma pumilum* (which shares its habitat) which has scattered hairs on the lemma between the tufts and the awn is not visible to the naked eye. Also similar to *R. buchananii* which has a long bent awn on the floret.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (east of the main divide south to Otago).

HABITAT

A species of dry lowland and montane grassland.

GENUS

Rytidosperma

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Rytidosperma thomsonii (Buchanan) Connor et Edgar

SYNONYMS

Danthonia thomsonii Buchanan, *Triodia thomsonii* (Buchanan) Petrie, *Notodanthonia thomsonii* (Buchanan) Zotov

TAXONOMIC NOTES

There is good morphological and cytogenetic evidence that *R. thomsonii* could be split into at least two species

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

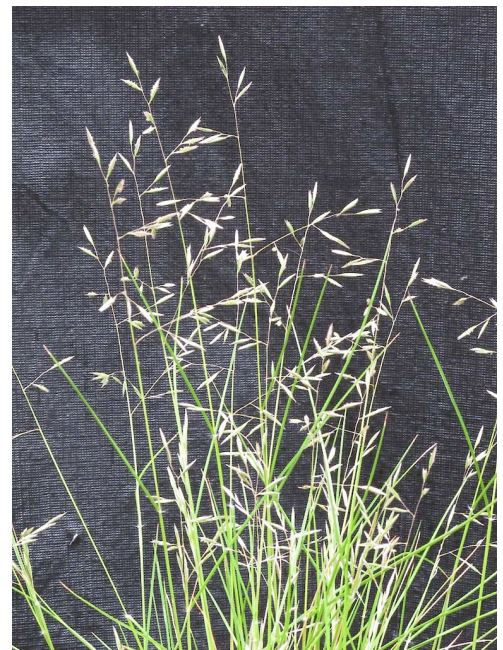
No

FRUITING

January



Herbarium voucher. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



In cultivation. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

ETYMOLOGY

rytidosperma: Wrinkled seed

thomsonii: After Thomson

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to the grasses of New Zealand

NVS CODE

RYTTHO

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 24, 48

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2012 | Data Deficient

2009 | Data Deficient

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Endangered | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, NR, NStr, PF, Sp, TL 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.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/rytidosperma-thomsonii/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026