

Trisetum antarcticum

SYNONYMS

Aira antarctica G.Forst., *Avena antarctica* (G.Forst.) Roem. et Schult.,
Trisetum saxeticolum Cockayne et Allan

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Trisetum antarcticum (G.Forst.) Trin.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

TRIAN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Declining

2004 | Gradual Decline

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island south from the southern Egmont Coast, on Kapiti Island and western and southern Wellington Coasts to Cape Palliser. In the South Island at Cape Farewell and along the outer Marlborough Sounds and adjacent islands.

HABITAT

Coastal, on gravel, sand and bluffs.



In cultivation, ex Makara. Dec 2004.
Photographer: Barbara Mitcalfe



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FEATURES

Densely tufted, dull green to grey-green grass up to 400 mm tall, with rather rigid leaves usually reaching or sometimes overtopping the dense spike-like panicles. branching extravaginal at plant base, sometimes intravaginal above. Leaf-sheath to 40 mm, very minutely pubescent or with extremely minute appressed hairs between ribs. Ligule 0.2-0.6 mm, truncate, erose often sparsely minutely ciliate, undersides sometimes minutely prickly-toothed. Leaf-blade 35-220 x 1.5-4 mm, flat or inrolled, undersides mostly smooth, often scabrid near the long-narrow tapering apex; upper surface ribbed with sparse to dense minute hairs and prickly-teeth on ribs, hairs slightly longer near ligule; margins minutely prickly-toothed. Culm 40-300 mm long, internodes glabrous, occasionally bearing a few minute prickly-teeth below panicle. Panicle 20-150 x 6-25 mm, compact, oblong, very dense, rarely with some lower branches and pedicels smooth or with sparse minute prickly-teeth or rarely minute hairs. Spikelets 4.5-7.0 mm, greyish green or brownish amber. Glumes unequal, hyaline, keel thickened with sparse long prickly-teeth on upper half; lower 2/3 to 4/5 length of upper, linear-lanceolate, upper slightly < spikelet, elliptic; margins with prickly-teeth near acuminate to almost mucronate apex. Lemma 4.0-6.2 mm, bidentate to shortly bicuspid, papillose, prickly-toothed above and on keel; awn 3.5-6.0, initially straight becoming recurved, insertion in upper 1/4 of lemma. palea with minute prickly-teeth on keels and usually on margins. Callus hairs to 0.5 mm. Rachilla hairs to 2.5 mm. Lodicules c.1 mm, glabrous. Anthers 1.0-1.7 mm. Ovary 0.8 mm; stigma-styles to 1.3 mm. Seed 2.5-3.0 x 0.6 mm.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to the grasses of New Zealand](#)

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from the nine other indigenous species by the dense, compact, oblong panicle (rarely with spreading lower branches) and by the stiff, rigidly erect, flat grey-green to dull green leaves with the undersides glabrous and the upper minutely, though distinctly scabrid.

FLOWERING

November - February

FRUITING

December - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed and the division of whole plants. An attractive grass for an open spot in well drained soil. Once established rather drought tolerant.

THREATS

Still quite common in parts of its range but there has been a range contraction around Wellington due to the spread of weeds into its habitat, and also because of greywacke quarrying along the south coast.

ETYMOLOGY

trisetum: Three-bristled

antarcticum: Antarctic

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Edgar, E.; Connor, H.E. 2000: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Christchurch, Manaaki Whenua Press. 650 pp.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/trisetum-antarcticum/>