

# Zizania latifolia

## COMMON NAME

Manchurian rice grass

## FAMILY

Poaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Zizania latifolia* (Griseb.) Stapf

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## NVS CODE

ZIZLAT

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Large growing marginal emergent grass with light (dull) green, coarse, long straight leaves growing in fans, and purplish - red/brown flowers.

## DISTRIBUTION

Locally naturalised Northland, Auckland, Waikato and Wellington, abundant on the margins of Northern Wairoa River, Northland.

## HABITAT

Lowland still and slow flowing water bodies (both fresh water or moderately saline).

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

## FEATURES

Tall marginal perennial. Coarse tufts, 2-4m in height. Stout spreading rhizomes. Leaves light green, up to 1 m or more long and 1-2 cm wide, with a stout midrib, papery, harsh, dull greygreen, taper to point, rustle loudly in wind. The ligule a very dense fringe of hairs. Inflorescences purplish or reddish brown, 20 to 40 cm long, dense and soft to touch. Lower part is spreading and male, the upper part is more closed and with female flowers.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Raupo (*Typha orientalis*). Raupo is usually shorter (1-3m) than Manchurian wild rice, with bluish-green leaves with a characteristic twist in the leaf blade and a cylindrical brown flower spike.

## FLOWERING

November, December

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Violet/Purple

## FRUITING

Autumn



Habitat of *Zizania latifolia*. Te Harakiki Swamp, Kapiti Coast. Jul 2007. Photographer: Robyn Smith



Section of leaf blade, adaxial side. Jul 2007. Photographer: Robyn Smith

## LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Plants are hermaphroditic with the female inflorescence borne above the male inflorescence. Large amounts of seed is produced which germinated quickly. Reproduces through seed or vegetatively through tailoring and rhizome extension. Rhizomes spread slowly outwards. Seeds and rhizome fragments spread via water, livestock, machinery, e.g. graders, dumping of green waste, eel nets, boats and trailers, clothing and possibly by birds.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1906

## ORIGIN

Eastern Asia

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Accidental, contamination of ballast

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Notify Ministry for Primary Industries if found.

## TOLERANCES

Tolerant of drought and frost; highly tolerant of poor drainage and intolerant of shade. Regrowth from underground rhizomes occurs after physical damage, fire and grazing.

## 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](#).

## ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Champion et al (2012). Freshwater Pests of New Zealand. NIWA publication.

<http://www.niwa.co.nz/freshwater-and-estuaries/management-tools/identification-guides-and-fact-sheets/freshwater-pest-species>.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/zizania-latifolia/>