

# Chionochloa crassiuscula subsp. directa



## COMMON NAMES

snow tussock

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Short, slender, tussock with long prostrate stems forming large patches. **Leaves** shining, smooth, mostly straight, acute, deciduous, leaving many imbricate old sheaths. **Leaf-sheath** to 100 mm, glabrous, often reddish, shining above, darkened below, sometimes purpled or reddened, persistent, entire, compressed, sometimes apical tuft of hairs to 1 mm. **Ligule** 0.25 mm long. **Leaf-blade** to 250 × 3 mm, keeled, drawn out into long tapering, thin, straight, often somewhat twisting, pointed apex pungent, conduplicate, disarticulating at ligule, underside glabrous except for prickle-teeth towards apex, adaxially papillate but with some prickle-teeth especially near ligule; margin thickened, long hairs below or sometimes with prickle-teeth. **Culm** to 500 mm, often purpled, internodes glabrous. **Inflorescence** to 150 mm, open, pulvinate; spikelets often paired on flexuous branches; rachis, branches and pedicels with mixed long and short hairs or rachis hairy on margins only. **Spikelets** of up to 7 golden florets. **Glumes** thin, purpled, acute or mucronate from between teeth or aristate to erose, greater than or equal to adjacent lemma lobes; lower to 12 mm, shortly 1–3-nerved, glabrous, upper to 16 mm, 5–7-nerved, margin often long hairy below otherwise glabrous. **Lemma** to 5.5 mm, shining; densely hairy only on margin and aside central nerve, < sinus; lateral lobes to 6.5 mm including awn to 3 mm, or triangular-acute or long acute; central awn to 12 mm slightly twisting and markedly reflexed from flat column to 2 mm. **Palea** to 7 mm. **Callus** to 1 mm, hairs to 2.5 mm. **Rachilla** to 1.5 mm. **Lodicules** to 2 mm. **Anthers** to 4 mm. **Ovary** to 0.75 mm; stigma-styles to 3.5 mm. **Seed** to 3 mm.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Southland (Longwood Range, Takitimu and Hunter Mountains).

## HABITAT

Upper montane to alpine in short scrub, or within poorly drained or boggy grasslands. Often locally dominant.

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPS, RR

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## THREATS

Not threatened. Listed because it is a naturally uncommon, regional endemic.

## DETAILED TAXONOMY

### FAMILY

Poaceae

### AUTHORITY

*Chionochloa crassiuscula* subsp. *directa* Connor

### SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1991)

### ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## ECOLOGY

### FLOWERING

October–January

### FRUITING

December–May

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Often difficult. Can be grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces but tend to be very slow growing. Prefers a permanently damp, acidic soil and semi-shade. Plants must never be allowed to dry out.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).

## OTHER INFORMATION

### ETYMOLOGY

**chionochloa**: Snow grass

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

### NVS CODE

CHICSD

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 42$

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

### ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000).

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## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/chionochloa-crassiuscula-subsp-directa/>

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