

Poa xenica

BIOSTATUS

Native

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dioecious, glaucous to reddish-green, weakly tufted or pendulous, rather coarse, long-leaved plants, branching extravaginal, internodes elongate, rooting at nodes; leaf-blades persistent. **Leaf-sheath** 100 mm, keeled, ribbed, open to base, becoming dull brown and fragile, finely retrorsely hairy, margin membranous, darker brown. **Ligule** 1 mm, ciliate, abaxially finely hairy. **Collar** conspicuous, margin short hairy. **Leaf-blade** to 800 × 3–4 mm, coriaceous, folded below and at apex, ± flat elsewhere, abaxially glabrous with some long hairs near collar, adaxially clothed with small antrorse hairs, denser near ligule; margins abaxially sparsely prickle-toothed becoming smooth with apex prickle-toothed and sharp-pointed. **Culm** to 850 mm, many noded, erect or with some geniculate nodes, nodes swollen, coloured, glabrous; internodes glabrous. **Panicle** to 250 mm, open, violet-suffused, subtended by bract to 2.5 mm; several to many solitary rarely binate branches at internodes, naked below with solitary spikelets, branches > internodes; rachis glabrous, branches and pedicels glabrous to sparsely shortly prickle-toothed. **Spikelets** 10–12 × 2 mm, gaping at anthesis, 1–6 widely separated florets. **Glumes** unequal, centrally green, violet elsewhere, nerves elevated; lower 2.5–3.5 mm, 1–3-nerved, upper 3.5–5.0 mm, 5-nerved, adaxially shortly hairy at apex, margins ciliate. **Lemma** 4.5–6.0 mm, 5-nerved, centrally green, violet elsewhere, abundantly finely pubescent throughout, keel prickle-toothed above, margins ciliate, membranous above, apex recurved, shortly lobed and mucronate, becoming erose. **Palea** 4.5–5.2 mm, less than or equal to lemma, apex bifid, keels minutely stiffly hairy. **Callus** 0.25 mm, short, blunt, glabrous or with a few prickle-teeth. **Rachilla** 1.5 mm, glabrous or with a few prickle-teeth at base; prolonged. **Lodicules** 0.5–1.0 mm, acutely lobed, tip ciliate. **Anthers** of male flowers: 2.75–3.75 mm, yellow or violet-suffused; of female flowers: 2.0–2.2 mm, white, pollenless. **Gynoeceium** of male flowers: 0.8–1.0 mm; of female flowers: ovary 0.8–1.2 mm, glabrous; stigma-styles 2.0–3.5 mm. Seeds not seen.

SIMILAR TAXA

Poa xenica is most similar to *P. anceps* G.Forst. both species have a similar growth habit and extravaginal branching. However, *P. anceps* is monoecious and *P. xenica* dioecious. Vegetatively it is distinguished by the glaucous to reddish-green weakly tufted to pendulous foliage, leaf blades whose upper surface is distinctly ribbed rather than inconspicuously so, and smooth rather than covered in prickle teeth. Further the spikelets of *P. anceps* are 3.0–7.5 mm while those of *P. xenica* are 10–12 mm long.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (North-west Nelson (South Branch Riwaka River and Pikiruna Range (Gorge Creek)).

HABITAT

Montane on marble cliffs in damp shaded sites and under associated sparse to moderately dense scrub on rubble fields.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

THREATS

Not Threatened. However known from only three very small populations in what appear to be secure habitats.

DETAILED TAXONOMY

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Poa xenica Edgar et Connor

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1999)

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

ECOLOGY

FLOWERING

Unknown—insufficiently studied and collected.

FRUITING

Unknown—insufficiently studied and collected.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Has been grown from rooted pieces but dislikes drying out and humidity. Rarely flowers in cultivation. Best in a pot, partially submerged in water.

OTHER INFORMATION

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ETYMOLOGY

poa: Meadow grass

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 28$

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2012 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000).

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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