

# Stenostachys laevis

## COMMON NAMES

grassland wheatgrass

## SYNONYMS

*Asprella laevis* Petrie, *Cockaynea laevis* (Petrie) Zotov, *Hystrix laevis* (Petrie) Allan, *Elymus laevis* (Petrie) Á.Löve et Connor

## FAMILY

Poaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Stenostachys laevis* (Petrie) Connor

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

Yes

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## NVS CODE

STELAE

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Data Deficient

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island; only known from Reporoa Bog (North West Ruahine Range). South Island; throughout except Nelson, and Westland. Stewart Island/Rakiura.

## HABITAT

Small grass of tussock grasslands, grey scrub, shaded cliff faces, and lake sides. Often in flushes. Occasionally coastal. From sea level to 1300 m a.s.l.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial grass, forming loose patches, these rooting and shooting freely at nodes. **Inflorescences** narrow, nodding, on long slender stems (culms). **Leaf-sheath** 5–10 cm, either covered in curved hairs or hairless. **Ligule** 0.5–1 mm, prominent, tips lacerated. **Leaf-blade** 15–25 cm × 1.5–2 mm, flat (often inrolled in coastal plants), thin, with a prominent midrib, hairless or finely hairy. **Culms** 50–75 cm, nodes inconspicuous, internodes hairless, slender. **Inflorescence** narrow, slender, 8–15 cm, of 10–25 spikelets > internodes. **Spikelets** 8–12 mm, of 1–2 florets. **Glumes** 2, awn-like, 2–6 mm, equal, 1-nerved. **Lemma** 6.5–8 mm, smooth except for prickle-teeth towards bifid tip, apex either spine-tipped (mucronate) or extended as a short, toothed, awn 0.5–1 mm. **Anthers** 1.6–2.6 mm. **Seed** 4 mm.



Ex. Lake Tennyson. Photographer: Gillian M. Crowcroft, Licence: All rights reserved.

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

### Key to the grasses of New Zealand

#### SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *S. deceptorix* Connor and *S. gracilis* (Hook.f.) Connor by the lemma (lower set of bracts which enclose the flower, grass equivalent of petals) apex possessing between the lateral teeth either a spine-tip (mucronate) or short awned. *Stenostachys* grasses are perhaps most similar to *Anthosachne* spp. because the glumes are either absent or reduced and awn-like, and by the spikelets which are positioned edgewise along the inflorescence stem (rachis) rather than side-on as in *Anthosachne*. Inrolled leaves of coastal plants become flat in cultivation.

#### FLOWERING

January–March

#### FRUITING

March–May

#### PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Very easy from rooted pieces, divisions of whole plants and from fresh seed. Grows best in light shade.

#### THREATS

*Stenostachys laevis* faces no apparent threats but it is certainly uncommon, and easily overlooked. Because of this, there are few recent >1980 records.

#### ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

#### NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Stenostachys laevis* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/stenostachys-laevis/> (Date website was queried)

#### MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/stenostachys-laevis/>

#### PDF DATE

17 September 2024