

Apodasmia similis

COMMON NAMES

jointed wire rush, oioi

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Red/Pink

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dioecious, rush-like perennial herb. **Rhizomes** 3–7 mm diameter, covered in closely sheathing, imbricating, dark brown scales, 10–20 mm long, each enclosing a tuft of coarse brown hairs. **Culms** numerous, 0.5–2.6 × 1.5–2.5–(3.0) mm, densely packed, erect, sometimes with upper third decurved to more or less pendulous, simple, terete, glaucous, grey-green, yellow-green or red-green. **Leaves** reduced to bract-like sheaths, these dark brown or maroon-black, regularly spaced at 70–90 mm intervals at the base of the culm, 10–60 mm apart higher up; margins entire. **Male inflorescences** paniculate or fascicled, bearing numerous stalked spikelets; upper floral bracts ovate-lanceolate, mucronate, red-brown to maroon, margins membranous; tepals 4–6 more or less completely hyaline, the outer longer, brownish, the inner shorter, paler; stamens 3; ovary rudimentary. **Female inflorescences** fascicled, spikelets more or less sessile; upper floral bracts ovate, mucronate, > tepals; tepals 6, the outer keeled, lanceolate, acuminate, inner flat, smaller, more or less hyaline, more obtuse, mucronate; styles 3, united to midway, bright red to orange-red; staminodes 0. **Fruit** c. 1 × 0.5 mm, triquetrous, indehiscent. **Seed** c. 1 × 0.4 mm, oblong-elliptical, golden-brown, surface reticulate, both ends apiculate, one end dark brown, the other, almost white.

SIMILAR TAXA

Easily distinguished from *Sporadanthus* F.Muell and *Empodisma* L.A.S.Johnson et D.F.Cutler by the unbranched, mostly grey-green, or reddish stems bearing regularly spaced bract-like, sheathing dark brown or maroon-black leaves, and terminal, many-flowered, paniculate to fascicled male and female spikelets.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Three Kings, North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands.

HABITAT

Mostly coastal in estuaries, saltmarshes, dunes and sandy flats and hollows. Occasionally inland in gumland scrub, along lake margins, fringing peat bogs or surrounding hot springs.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

DETAILED TAXONOMY

GENUS

Apodasmia



Southland. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 27/03/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Male plant, Colville, November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FAMILY

Restionaceae

AUTHORITY

Apodasmia similis (Edgar) B.G.Briggs et L.A.S.Johnson

SYNONYMS

Leptocarpus similis Edgar

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Needs critical comparison with *Apodasmia chilensis* (Gay) B.G.Briggs et L.A.S.Johnson, particularly the Chatham Island plants which seem a close match for that South American species.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

ECOLOGY

FLOWERING

October–December

FRUITING

December–March

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Fruit are possibly dispersed by water and wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces. Does well in a range of soils and moisture regimes. Requires full sun to flourish. Now a very popular tub and traffic island plant in some cities—most material seen is from the Chatham Islands.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

OTHER INFORMATION

CULTIVATION

Occasionally available from mainstream plant and specialist native plant nurseries. Most stock seen is of the large, glaucous Chatham Island form.

ETYMOLOGY

apodasmia: From the Greek apodasmios meaning 'separated', referring to the widely disjunct distribution of the species (there are two species in Australia, one in New Zealand and one in Chile) (Briggs & Johnson, 1998)

similis: Similar to another species

NVS CODE

APOSIM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 48

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2024 | Regionally Not Threatened [Help](#)

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Regional conservation status of indigenous vascular plants in Otago](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2024) report.

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT [Help](#)

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland](#)" Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Briggs BG, Johnson LAS. 1998. New genera and species of Australian Restionaceae (Poales). *Telopea* 7(4): 345–373.

Moore LB, Edgar E. 1970. Flora of New Zealand, Volume II. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Monocotyledones except Gramineae. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 354 p.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Edgar and Moore (1970).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/apodasmia-similis/>

PDF DATE

21 October 2025