

Nassella neesiana

COMMON NAME

Chilean needle grass

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Nassella neesiana (Trin. et Rupr.) Barkworth

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

NASNEE

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect, tussocky, tufted perennial grass to 1 m tall (prostrate with dense horizontal tillers where heavily grazed). **Stem base** swollen. **Leaves** yellowish-green, 400 × 1–5 mm (rolled when in drought), margins rough and bristly. **Leaf collar** has tufts of erect hairs on both sides. **Ligule** short, membranous. **Seedheads** of 2 types: large, drooping, open, harsh, purplish, turning silver; and small, hidden in leaf sheaths (appear as swellings in stem above node). **Seed** 8–10 mm long, narrow, bristly, sharply pointed, with 60–80 mm twisted hair-like awn, November–December.

SIMILAR TAXA

Lolium arundinaceum subsp. *arundinaceum* is similar in growth but *N. neesiana* has narrower leaves and the spear-like attachment on the seed is distinctive.

FLOWERING

November, December

YEAR NATURALISED

1940

ORIGIN

S. America

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](#).

Reason For Introduction

Ornamental.

Life Cycle Comments

Perennial. seeds are >90% viable and survive for several years in the soil and germinate in autumn and spring.

Dispersal

Restricted distribution due to a lack of wind dispersal; localised spread occurs through seed being transported by stock, in hay, on clothing, by machinery and in water.

MORE INFORMATION



<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/nassella-neesiana/>