

Juncus acutus

COMMON NAME

sharp rush

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus acutus L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

JUNACS

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Upright spiny rush to 1 m tall, with tall cylindrical sharp tipped, stems and leaves forming dense stiff clumps, with clumped flowerheads near the end of each stem, made up of many red-brown to orange flowers/capsules (fruit).

DISTRIBUTION

Scattered, but locally abundant in Northland, Auckland, Manawatu and Wellington, mostly coastal.

HABITAT

Wet and seasonally dry sandy areas

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Very stout, forming dense prickly tufts; rhizomes stout, woody. **Stems** (40–)60–100 cm × 1.5–5 mm, very stiff and erect, smooth, light green. **Basal sheaths** shining dark red-brown. **Leaves** 1–2, basal, terete, similar to stem, with very pungent tip. **Inflorescence** large, compact 5–15 cm long. **Flowers** crowded. **Tepals** c. 3 mm long, ± equal, very hard, outer mucronate, inner truncate to emarginate with wide membranous margin at tip. **Stamens** 6. **Capsule** 4.5–5 mm long, much > tepals, ovoid, abruptly tapered, acute, reddish-brown to brownish-orange. **Seeds** with distinct tails.

SIMILAR TAXA

No other rush has a combination of leaves similar to the stem, sharp pointed and large (> 4 mm) red-brown to orange capsules in a dense clustered head.

FLOWERING

Summer

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Orange

FRUITING

Autumn



Manawatu Estuary. Aug 1989. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Manawatu Estuary. Aug 1989. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Seed dispersed by animals, water or contaminated machinery.

YEAR NATURALISED

1923

ORIGIN

Europe, Africa, North and South America

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Can be controlled manually, mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation.

ETYMOLOGY

juncus: From the Latin jungere 'to tie or bind', the stems of some species being used to make cord (Johnson and Smith)

NOTES ON TAXONOMY

Subgenus *Juncus*, Section *Juncus*(*Thalassii*) Kirschner (2002: *Juncaceae* 2)

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description from Healy and Edgar (1980).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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<https://docs.niwa.co.nz/library/public/FreInSpec.pdf>

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Healy, A. J.; Edgar, E. 1980. Flora of New Zealand, Volume III. Adventive Cyperaceous, Petalous and Spathaceous Monocotyledons. Government Printer, Wellington. 220 p.

Johnson, A. T.; Smith, H. A. 1986. Plant Names Simplified: Their pronunciation, derivation and meaning. Landsman Bookshop Ltd, Buckenhill, UK.

Johnson, P. N.; Brooke, P. A. 1989. Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319 p.

Kirschner, J. (compiler) 2002. *Juncaceae* 2: *Juncus* subg. *Juncus*, Species Plantarum: Flora of the World Part 7: 1–336.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/juncus-acutus/>