

# Juncus bulbosus

## COMMON NAME

bulbous rush

## SYNONYMS

*Verojuncus bulbosus* (L.) Záveská Drábková & Pročková

## FAMILY

Juncaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Juncus bulbosus* L.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

## NVS CODE

JUNBUL

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low-growing leafy rush to 25 cm tall (more than this in aquatic plants), leaves very fine, usually swollen at the leaf base, submerged leaves are fine and thread-like, up to 1 m long, plant often reddish with branched flowerheads made up of many small clusters of 2–6 yellow-brown flowers/capsules (fruit), but often clusters of leaves can be found on these flowers.

## DISTRIBUTION

Widespread and common throughout.

## HABITAT

Mostly peaty sites in wet pastures, water body margins, drains and wetlands, sometimes submerged.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Low-growing, variable perennial rush, 5–15 cm high, densely tufted or with prostrate rooting stems with leafy tufts at nodes, often mat-forming or submerged. **Stems** usually reddish-tinged, slender, swollen at base, rooting at nodes. **Leaves** tiny and bristle-like (narrow, grass-like on floating and submerged plants), with distinct hollow compartments separated by partitions. **Inflorescence** terminal, variable, unbranched and few flowered or branched and open, occ with tufts of bristly leaves. **Flowers** tiny, green to brown. **Seed capsules** 2–3 mm long, yellowish-brown.

## SIMILAR TAXA

No other introduced rushes have the clumped filamentous leaves, swelling at the nodes, proliferous flower heads. In aquatic habitats the leaves are longer and more grass-like and may be confused with *J. bufonius*, but the stems swollen at the base and the septa (cross wall) visible in the leaves distinguish *J. bulbosus* from *J. bufonius*. The native *Juncus novae-zelandiae* is superficially similar but has black capsules and lacks the leafy proliferous heads.

## FLOWERING

Spring to early summer



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## FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Green

## FRUITING

Summer to autumn

## LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by animals, water or contaminated machinery.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1896

## ORIGIN

Eurasia and North Africa

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant.

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Rarely controlled, but 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)

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

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

Proćków et al. (2023) proposed a taxonomic segregation of *Juncus* into six genera based on molecular and morphological evidence. Whilst it has long been recognised that the current circumscription of *Juncus* includes morphologically divergent taxa—reflected in the recognition of numerous subgenera and sections—the consensus view of the NZPCN website taxonomy subcommittee, taking into consideration advice from Australian *Juncus* expert Dr Karen Wilson (NSW Herbarium) and others in Europe is that the generic segregations proposed need further consideration and testing. Accordingly, it has been decided to maintain the current broad circumscription of *Juncus*, but to include all new names as synonyms in factsheets. We thank, in particular, Dr Wilson for her helpful comments.

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

Proćków, J., Závěská Drábková, L. 2023. A revision of the Juncaceae with delimitation of six new genera: nomenclatural changes in *Juncus*. *Phytotaxa* 622(1): 17–41.

## MORE INFORMATION

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