

Juncus microcephalus

COMMON NAMES

South American rush

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus microcephalus Kunth

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

JUNMIC

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Upright leafy rush to 90 cm tall, leaves round with internal cross walls (feels like clicks if you hold base of leaf between finger and thumb and slide up), plant with branched flowerheads made up of many heads of 4 to 10 reddish brown flowers/capsules (fruit).

DISTRIBUTION

Common throughout the North Island and northern South Island, usually lowland.

HABITAT

Aquatic: Emergent.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Loosely or densely tufted perennial, bronze or occasionally red-purple at base. Stems 15-90 cm high, without internal transverse septa below inflorescence. Leaves terete or \pm compressed, transversely-septate with septa usually evident externally. Inflorescence 6-24 cm long, very variable, open, much-branched, with 3-8-flowered clusters at ends of branches. Tepals 3-3.5 mm long, all \pm equal, broad, acute. Stamens 6. Capsule 2.5-3.5 mm long, $<$ to \pm = tepals, broad, depressed at top, minutely mucronate, reddish-brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to other tubular septate leaved rushes, but is taller and stouter than most other species (except *J. acutiflorus*) and has flat topped casules with a mucronate tip.

FLOWERING

Spring to early summer

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown



Juncus microcephalus. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Juncus microcephalus. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FRUITING

Summer to autumn

LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by animals, water or contaminated machinery.

YEAR NATURALISED

1790

ORIGIN

South America

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not controlled in New Zealand.

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)

ATTRIBUTION

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

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REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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