

Juncus antarcticus

COMMON NAME

dwarf rush

SYNONYMS

Juncus pauciflorus Kirk; *Juncus brevifolius* Kirk; *Australojuncus antarcticus* (Hook.f.) Záveská Drábková & Pročków

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus antarcticus Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

JUNANT

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. North Island (from the Central Volcanic Plateau south), South Island and Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands, Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku. Present in Australia.

HABITAT

A local species of wetlands, bogs, mires and muddy ground. Primarily subalpine to alpine in the northern part of its range but descends to sea level around Otago, and on the Subantarctic Islands.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Bright green tufted perennial. **Stems** 20–120 mm long, 1 mm diameter at base, tapering above. **Leaves** numerous, all basal, equal to or < stems, bright green, 15–70 × 1 mm, lamina linear-subulate, solid, non-septate, canaliculate above, usually subterete to terete near the obtuse apex, otherwise flattened; sheath broad, without auricles.

Inflorescence a single (rarely double), terminal 2–10-flowered, globose head, 3–10 mm wide, if double then the lower head is the smaller of the pair. **Flowers** c. 3 mm long; tepals more or less equal, usually dark brown to almost black, very rarely light brown. **Stamens** 3(–6). **Capsule** almost equal to tepals, ovoid to oblong, black, lustrous, especially toward the acute apex, mucro short and blunt-ended.



Ruahine range, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Arthurs Pass. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 29/05/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA

Mostly montane to alpine on the main islands of New Zealand this species is not easily confused with other indigenous or exotic *Juncus* spp. The small stature, and usually single, globose flower head places this species close to *J. dreganus* Kunth, *J. lomatophyllus* Spreng., *J. caespiticius* E. Meyer and *J. capitatus* Weigel, species from which it differs by the channelled leaves, except for *J. caespiticius* which is much larger and usually coastal and *J. capitatus* which differs by the usually reddish tepals 4–5 mm long, » capsules in length.

FLOWERING

October–January

FRUITING

October–May

LIFE CYCLE

Mucilaginous seeds are dispersed by attachment, wind and water (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy in a pot but prefers a damp soil and dislikes humidity.

ETYMOLOGY

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

antarcticus: Antarctic

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

TAXONOMIC NOTES

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

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (1 September 2006). Description based on Moore & Edgar (1970).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

Moore, L. B.; Edgar, E. 1970: *Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I*. Government Printer, Wellington.

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

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009: Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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