

Chionochloa crassiuscula subsp. directa

COMMON NAME

snow tussock

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1991)

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Chionochloa crassiuscula subsp. directa Connor

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

CHICSD

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Southland (Longwood Range, Takitimu and Hunter Mountains)).

HABITAT

Upper montane to alpine in short scrub, or within poorly drained or boggy grasslands. Often locally dominant.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Short, slender, tussock with long prostrate stems forming large patches. **Leaves** shining, smooth, mostly straight, acute, deciduous, leaving many imbricate old sheaths. **Leaf-sheath** to 100 mm, glabrous, often reddish, shining above, darkened below, sometimes purpled or reddened, persistent, entire, compressed, sometimes apical tuft of hairs to 1 mm. **Ligule** 0.25 mm long. **Leaf-blade** to 250 × 3 mm, keeled, drawn out into long tapering, thin, straight, often somewhat twisting, pointed apex pungent, conduplicate, disarticulating at ligule, underside glabrous except for prickle-teeth towards apex, adaxially papillate but with some prickle-teeth especially near ligule; margin thickened, long hairs below or sometimes with prickle-teeth. **Culm** to 500 mm, often purpled, internodes glabrous. **Inflorescence** to 150 mm, open, pulvinate; spikelets often paired on flexuous branches; rachis, branches and pedicels with mixed long and short hairs or rachis hairy on margins only. **Spikelets** of up to 7 golden florets. **Glumes** thin, purpled, acute or mucronate from between teeth or aristate to erose, greater than or equal to adjacent lemma lobes; lower to 12 mm, shortly 1–3-nerved, glabrous, upper to 16 mm, 5–7-nerved, margin often long hairy below otherwise glabrous. **Lemma** to 5.5 mm, shining; densely hairy only on margin and aside central nerve, < sinus; lateral lobes to 6.5 mm including awn to 3 mm, or triangular-acute or long acute; central awn to 12 mm slightly twisting and markedly reflexed from flat column to 2 mm. **Palea** to 7 mm. **Callus** to 1 mm, hairs to 2.5 mm. **Rachilla** to 1.5 mm. **Lodicules** to 2 mm. **Anthers** to 4 mm. **Ovary** to 0.75 mm; stigma-styles to 3.5 mm. **Seed** to 3 mm.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to the grasses of New Zealand](#)

FLOWERING

October–January

FRUITING

December–May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Often difficult. Can be grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces but tend to be very slow growing. Prefers a permanently damp, acidic soil and semi-shade. Plants must never be allowed to dry out.

THREATS

Not threatened. Listed because it is a naturally uncommon, regional endemic.

ETYMOLOGY

chionochloa: Snow grass

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Edgar E, Connor HE. 2000. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Christchurch, Manaaki Whenua Press. 650 p.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/chionochloa-crassiuscula-subsp-directa/>