

Connorochloa tenuis

COMMON NAME

prostrate bluegrass

SYNONYMS

Agropyron scabrum var. *tenuis* Buchanan, *A. tenue* (Buchanan) Connor;
Elymus tenuis (Buchanan) Á.Löve et Connor

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Connorochloa tenuis (Buchanan) Barkworth, S.W.L.Jacobs, et H.Q.Zhang

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

Yes

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

CONTEN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 56

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Data Deficient

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Data Deficient

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island (Volcanic Plateau and Ruahine Range), South Island (North-west Nelson, Marlborough and east of main divide).

HABITAT

A species of open short tussock (*Festuca*)-dominated grassland from sea-level to 900 m.



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Elymus tenuis. Photographer: Alan Stewart, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Prostrate, bronze-leaved grass. **Upper culm** (stem) internode greatly elongating after flowering and trailing along ground. **Leaf-sheath** 5–7 cm, hairless. **Ligule** 0.25–0.3 mm, very finely hairy. **Leaf-blade** 10–15 cm × 2 mm, bronzed, flat, sometimes rolled, smooth. hairless, ribbed, undersides with small prickle-teeth. **Culm** to 2 m or more, slender, trailing along ground, upper internode elongating after flowering, sometimes up to 1.5 m. **Inflorescence** wheat-like 10–15 cm, containing up to 15 spikelets. **Awn** 15–35 mm. **Seed** 4.5–5 mm. Description adapted from Edgar & Connor (2000).

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

SIMILAR TAXA

Connorochloa tenuis can be distinguished from all other indigenous Elymoid grasses by the easily detached culm trailing on the ground, by the uppermost internode greatly elongating following flowering, by the spikelets being appressed to the inflorescence stem, and by the anthers 2–3 mm long, coloured uniformly yellow. *Connorochloa* is morphologically most similar to some species of *Anthosachne*, differing from them in being octoploid and its combination of basal leaves that are 1–1.5–(2.0) mm wide, upper glumes that have 1.3–6.5 mm long awns, and straight lemma awns (9)–15–(35) mm long. *Connorochloa* is a new, monotypic genus established by Barkworth et al. (2011).

FLOWERING

No information available

FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

FRUITING

No information available

LIFE CYCLE

Florets are dispersed by wind and attachment (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from divisions of whole plants and from fresh seed.

THREATS

As large parts of its former range have become increasingly overwhelmed by introduced pasture grasses, observations suggest that *Connorochloa* has declined. However, there have been no serious attempts to quantify this decline, making an accurate conservation assessment impractical.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange May 2004. Description adapted from Edgar & Connor (2000).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Barkworth ME, Jacobs SWL. 2011: The Triticeae (Gramineae) in Australasia. *Telopea* 13: 37–56.
Edgar E, Connor HE. 2000. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Christchurch, Manaaki Whenua Press. 650 p.
Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/connorochloa-tenuis/>