

Eragrostis curvula

COMMON NAME

African love grass

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Eragrostis curvula (Schrad.) Nees

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

ERACUR

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Dry steep sites, short and tall tussock grassland, coastal areas, riverbeds, cliffs, herbfields. Can be dispersed short distances by wind.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Variable, densely tufted, tussock-like, erect or prostrate perennial grass to 1–1.5 m tall. Deciduous in cold areas. **Roots** fibrous, up to 50 cm deep. **Leaves** narrow and hair-like, 3–7 mm wide, rolled inwards, rough, bright green to bluegreen (blushes bronze-red after hard frost), usually curly at tips. **Seedheads** usually loose, airy panicles (occ compressed), 6–30 × 4–20 cm, with tufts of white hair on lower axils. **Seeds** blackish olive-purple (ripening greyish); on arching stems to 1 m long, summer. Several vars. in NZ, harshness and palatability varies widely.

SIMILAR TAXA

A vigorous densely tufted, perennial grass up to 1.5 m tall. Bright blue-green leaves that are harsh to the touch. The flower heads are more open than most other large grasses in NZ and are slightly pyramid shaped. The only grass in NZ with blackish seeds and curly leaf tips.

FLOWERING

November–December

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Seed and vegetative spread. Produces many seeds.

YEAR NATURALISED

1969

ORIGIN

Africa

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Agricultural

TOLERANCES

Is found mostly in drier areas.



Eragrostis curvula. Photographer: Auckland Regional Council, Licence: Public domain.



Karikari Peninsula. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 21/02/2011, Licence: CC BY.

ETYMOLOGY

eragrostis: From the Greek eros 'love' and agrostis 'grass'

NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord. The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/eragrostis-curvula/>