

Festuca matthewsii subsp. latifundii

COMMON NAME

southern blue fescue

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1998)

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Festuca matthewsii subsp. *latifundii* Connor

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 42$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Waitaki Basin and Central Otago – excluding the Dunstan, Pisa, and Old Man Ranges).

HABITAT

Subalpine to alpine and in intermontane basins. A major component of tussock grasslands on hills and plains.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Glaucous tussock with scabrid leaves and tall culms bearing reflexed branches of large spikelets. **Leaf-sheath** 30–100 mm, glabrous, margins membranous; apical auricles 0.4–1.0 mm, ciliate, approximately equal to ligule. **Leaf-blade** 80–300 × 0.5–0.9 mm, terete to ± hexagonal, undersides with short antrorse prickles especially on ribs, upper surface and margins with abundant longer white antrorse hairs. **Culm** 200–800 mm, usually exserted high above leaves, nodes dark, evident, internodes smooth but sometimes antrorsely scabrid. **Panicle** 60–180 mm, erect with 6–8 nodes, 10–20 spikelets; branches solitary or often binate, naked below, pulvinate and reflexed, basal branch 15–80 mm of 2–6 spikelets, uppermost 2–4 spikelets solitary on 2–4 mm pedicels; rachis margins prickletoothed sometimes smooth below, branches and pedicels prickletoothed on margins. **Spikelets** 10–16 × 4–6 mm, of 5–7 florets. **Glumes** unequal, keels sometimes prickletoothed, centrally green, brown or reddish, margins ciliate; lower 3.0–5.5 mm, 1-nerved, upper 3.5–6.5 mm, 3-nerved. **Lemma** 5–8 mm, 5-nerved, glaucous, keeled, smooth except for prickles at apex, margin antrorsely hairy; awn 1–3 mm. **Palea** 5.0–7.5 mm, usually greater than or equal to lemma, deeply bifid, keels toothed in upper ½ or more, interkeel hairs at apex, margins of flanks hairy above. **Callus** 0.2–0.3 mm, margin sparsely bearded; articulation ± oblique. **Rachilla** 1.0–1.5 mm, abundantly short stiff hairy. **Lodicules** 0.7–1.4 mm, usually hair-tipped. **Anthers** 3.0–4.2 mm, yellow to purple. **Ovary** 0.6–1.0 mm, hispid hairs at apex; stigma-styles 1.2–2.0 mm. **Seed** 2–3 mm.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

FLOWERING

October–December

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, Yellow

FRUITING

November–March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces. An attractive grass tolerant of most conditions but dislikes humidity.

ETYMOLOGY

festuca: From the Latin festuca 'stem' or 'blade of grass'

matthewsii: After Mathews

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/festuca-matthewsii-subsp-latifundii/>