

Juncus acuminatus

COMMON NAME

sharp-fruited rush

SYNONYMS

Verojuncus acuminatus (Michx.) Záveská Drábková & Pročková

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus acuminatus Michaux

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

JUNACU

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Upright leafy rush to 80 cm tall, leaves round with internal cross walls (feels like clicks if you hold base of leaf between finger and thumb and slide up), plant reddish with branched flower heads made up of many clusters of 6–10 light brown flowers/capsules (fruit).

DISTRIBUTION

Common throughout the North Island and northern South Island, usually lowland.

HABITAT

Margins of flowing and still water bodies, drains and wet pasture.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Strictly erect tufted perennial, commonly reddish-tinged. **Stems** 30–80 cm high, distinctly septate internally just below inflorescence. **Leaves** terete or ± compressed with distinct transverse septa. **Inflorescence** very variable, 3–20 cm long, open, much-branched with 6–10-flowered clusters at ends of branches. **Tepals** 2.5–3.5 mm long, ± equal, narrow-lanceolate, stiff, acuminate. **Stamens** 3. **Capsules** 2.5–3.5 mm long, = or slightly > tepals, narrow, acute, shortly beaked, straw-coloured to brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to other tubular septate leaved rushes, but only *J. acuminatus* and *J. canadensis* have septate stems beneath the inflorescence. *J. canadensis* has tailed seeds, larger capsules, is more densely upright and lacks the reddish tinged appearance.

FLOWERING

Spring to early summer



Juncus acuminatus. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Juncus acuminatus. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown

FRUITING

Summer to autumn

LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by animals, water or contaminated machinery.

YEAR NATURALISED

1915

ORIGIN

North and South America

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not controlled in New Zealand.

ETYMOLOGY

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

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Subgenus *Juncus*, Section *Ozophyllum* (Septati) Kirschner (2002: Juncaceae 2)

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

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description from Healy and Edgar (1980).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Healy, A. J. 1982. Identification of weeds and clovers. New Zealand Weed and Pest Control Society Publication. Editorial Services Limited, Featherston. 299 p.

Healy, A. J.; Edgar, E. 1980. Flora of New Zealand, Volume III. Adventive Cyperaceous, Petalous and Spathaceous Monocotyledons. Government Printer, Wellington. 220 p.

Johnson, P. N.; Brooke, P. A. 1989. Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319 p.

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

Kirschner, J. (compiler) (2002). Juncaceae 2: *Juncus* subg. *Juncus*, Species Plantarum: Flora of the World Part 7: 1–336.

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.

MORE INFORMATION

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