

Juncus acutiflorus

COMMON NAME

sharp-flowered rush

SYNONYMS

Verojuncus acutiflorus (Ehrh. ex Hoffm.) Záveská Drábková & Pročková

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus acutiflorus Hoffm.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

JUNACT

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Upright leafy rush to 1 m tall, leaves round with internal cross walls (feels like clicks if you hold base of leaf between finger and thumb and slide up), plant with branched flowerheads made up of many small clusters of 3–12 red brown flowers/capsules (fruit).

DISTRIBUTION

Common in Westland, also recorded once from Canterbury and Waikato.

HABITAT

Drains and wet pasture.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tall-growing, in loose clumps or in diffuse colonies, sometimes in radiating lines of stems; rhizome stout, far-extending. **Stems** 30–100 cm high, stiffly erect, without internal transverse septa below inflorescence. **Leaves** ± compressed, conspicuously transversely-septate across whole width. **Inflorescence** 1–12 cm long, open, diffuse and spreading, much-branched with numerous small dark brown clusters of 3–12 flowers at end of branches, secondary branches diverging at an acute angle. **Tepals** 2–2.5 mm long, lanceolate, long-acuminate, outer < inner, often with recurved tips. **Stamens** 6. **Capsule** c. 3 mm long, > tepals, gradually tapering to an acute point, red-brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to other tubular septate leaved rushes, but forms stiffly erect clumps (the tallest of this group), many branched with 3–12 acute-tipped red-brown capsules, with secondary branches being acutely angled.

FLOWERING

Summer



Leaf sheaths. Fensham Reserve, Wairarapa (from a specimen collected by Pat Enright). Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 04/02/2011, Licence: CC BY.



Creeping rhizome. Fensham Reserve, Wairarapa (from a specimen collected by Pat Enright). Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 07/02/2011, Licence: CC BY.

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown

FRUITING

Autumn

LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by animals, water or contaminated machinery.

YEAR NATURALISED

1953

ORIGIN

Eurasia

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 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., Záleská 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-acutiflorus/>