

Juncus caespiticus

SYNONYMS

Australojuncus caespiticus (E.Mey.) Závěská Drábková & Pročková

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus caespiticus Meyer in Lehm.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

JUNCAE

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP, SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. new Zealand: North Island, South Island. Present in Australia.

HABITAT

Usually coastal. Growing in or near damp seepages, or on steep, damp cliff faces festooned with *Austroblechnum banksii* (Hook.f.) Gasper et V.A.O.Dittrich, *Sonchus kirkii* Hamlin, *Marchantia macropora* Mitt. and Nostoc. Very rarely in dune swales or around the margins of brackish lagoons and streams. Also recorded on rock bluffs up to 500 m a.s.l.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tufted, dark green to red-green perennial forming circular patches up to 100 mm diameter. **Stems** 80–450 × 1–2 mm. **Leaves** numerous, all basal, grass-like, > inflorescence. **Flowers** 3 mm long; outer tepals acute or acuminate, shorter than the inner, more membranous, subobtuse tepals. **Stamens** 6. **Capsule** more or less equal in length to tepals, obtuse, mucronate.



Herbarium specimen: AK 289026.
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Herbarium specimen: AK 289026.
Photographed with permission of Auckland

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *J. planifolius* R.Br., *J. lomatophyllus* Spreng., and *J. dregeanus* Kunth by the inflorescence which is usually a single, globose head, and by the broadly channelled leaves. Since the 1980s a very similar, bright green to yellow green-leaved rush with dark black globose inflorescences has colonised the west coast of the North Island, initially around the Waitakere Coast but now known as far north as Hokianga and possibly as far south as Wanganui. This rush was subsequently identified as *Juncus sonderianus* Buchenau.

FLOWERING

September–January

FRUITING

October–July

LIFE CYCLE

Mucilaginous seeds are dispersed by attachment, wind and water (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. An interesting pot plant or species for a damp place within a rockery. Has considerable horticultural potential.

THREATS

Declining in the North Island, and locally extinct in some regions but the reasons for the decline are not clear. Status in the South Island is uncertain.

ETYMOLOGY

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

caespiticius: From the Latin *caespes* 'tuft' or 'sod of turf', meaning made of turf or turf-like

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

TAXONOMIC NOTES

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

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (1 September 2006). Description based on Moore & Edgar (1970).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Moore, L. B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I. Government Printer, Wellington.

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. <https://doi.org/10.11646/phytotaxa.622.1.2>.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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