

Juncus squarrosus

COMMON NAME

heath rush

SYNONYMS

Leafy rush to 35 cm tall, leaves wiry, mostly at the base of the plant, bending downwards just above the base, with flowerheads made up of a few clusters of 2 to 3 dark brown flowers/capsules (fruit).

FAMILY

Juncaceae

AUTHORITY

Juncus squarrosus L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

JUNSQU

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Leafy rush to 35 cm tall, leaves wiry, mostly at the base of the plant, bending downwards just above the base, with flowerheads made up of a few clusters of 2 to 3 dark brown flowers/capsules (fruit).

DISTRIBUTION

Scattered but local abundant from Wairarapa and South Island from Marlborough to Otago and also Stewart Island.

HABITAT

Peaty and other low nutrient (acid) sites.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial, very dense coarse tufts (15) -25-35 cm high; roots thick, spreading. Stems stout, stiffly erect. Leaves many, usually all basal, c. 1/2 length of stems, wiry, very stiff, channelled, abruptly reflexed from just above very wide sheath. Inflorescence 2-8-(12) cm long, strict, with few unequal branches. Flowers in clusters of 2-3-(6) at ends of branches. Tepals 5-6 mm long, ± equal, dark chestnut-brown even in young flowers, tips subulate to acute. Stamens 6, Capsule c. 5 mm long, slightly < tepals, obovate, very shortly mucronate, yellow-brown to dark chestnut-brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

No other rush has the reflexed stiff wiry leaves and the large dark chestnut brown capsules.

FLOWERING

Spring to early summer



Rock and Pillar Range. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Rock and Pillar Range. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown

FRUITING

Summer to autumn

LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by animals, water or contaminated machinery.

YEAR NATURALISED

1970

ORIGIN

Europe and North Africa

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Rarely controlled, but can be controlled manually, mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation, susceptible to grazing.

ETYMOLOGY

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

NOTES ON TAXONOMY

Subgenus *Agathyrion*, Section *Steirochloa* (*Poiophylli*) Kirschner (2002: Juncaceae 3)

ATTRIBUTION

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

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

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

Champion et al (2012). Freshwater Pests of New Zealand. NIWA publication.

<http://www.niwa.co.nz/freshwater-and-estuaries/management-tools/identification-guides-and-fact-sheets/freshwater-pest-species>

Kirschner, J. (compiler) (2002). Juncaceae 3: *Juncus* subg. *Agathyrion*, Species Plantarum: Flora of the World Part 8: 1-192.

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

MORE INFORMATION

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