

Lachnagrostis pilosa subsp. pilosa

COMMON NAME

robust wind grass

SYNONYMS

Deyeuxia pilosa Buchanan, Lachnagrostis richardii Zotov, Agrostis pilosa A.Rich.

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Lachnagrostis pilosa (Buchanan) Edgar subsp. pilosa

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

LACPSP

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 56, 98

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

.Endemic. In the North Island it is mainly found in mountainous areas but it also occurs on Cuvier Island and around the South Wellington Coast

HABITAT

Coastal to alpine (sea level to 1600 m a.s.l.). Often on rock outcrops, cliff faces, talus slopes, on boulders within braided river systems, amongst grey scrub or fringing wetlands (mostly on the Chatham Islands).



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Usually a robust, wide-leaved, perennial forming tufts 50–900 mm tall, rarely more gracile. **Leaves** usually harsh, dull green drying dark green. **Inflorescences** paniculate, usually rather large, firm, pale green and many flowered. **Branching** intravaginal. **Leaf-sheath** harsh textured, firm, striate, smooth or finely scabrid above, green to light brown. **Ligule** 1.3–6.0 mm, tapered, rounded, becoming denticulate, undersides finely scabrid. **Leaf-blade** 20–280 × 0.5–10 mm, usually flat, sometimes rather harsh and involute above, undersides with numerous fine, finely scabrid ribs, midrib prominent near base, upper surface finely ribbed and finely scabrid on ribs; margins finely scabrid, apex subobtusate. **Culm** 200–660 mm, erect, internodes usually entirely smooth, sometimes with a few prickly-teeth just below panicle, or rarely scabrid. **Panicle** 20–280 × 10–200 mm, at first stiff and contracted with erect branches, at maturity often more lax and ovate-elliptic; rachis smooth below, scabrid above, primary branches sparsely scabrid, filiform, very long, erect, secondary branchlets much shorter, very numerous, capillary, scaberulous, tipped by several clustered spikelets. **Spikelets** 3–6 mm, light green (rarely purple-green). **Glumes** ± equal, smooth and membranous, rarely sparsely scabrid in upper half, acute to acuminate; lower elliptic-lanceolate, scabrid on upper $\frac{1}{2}$ of keel, upper linear-lanceolate, scabrid on upper $\frac{1}{2}$ of keel. **Lemmas** 2.0–2.8 mm long, < $\frac{1}{2}$ length of glumes, elliptic-oblong, truncate, bearing long hairs in the lower $\frac{1}{2}$, lateral nerves shortly excurrent; awn 3.0–8.5 mm long, geniculate, mid-dorsal. **Palea** elliptic-oblong $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{2}{3}$ length of lemma, nerves scarcely evident, 0.2 mm apart, apex shallowly bifid. **Callus hairs** conspicuous, to 1.5 mm long, to $\frac{1}{2}$ length of lemma. **Rachilla prolongation** < 0.5 mm with hairs to c. 1 mm, or absent. **Lodicules** c. 0.5 mm long, lanceolate, acute. **Anthers** 0.6–1.8 mm long. **Seed** 1.3–1.8 × 0.4–0.6 mm.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from the other New Zealand *Lachnagrostis* by the generally robust, stout growth habit and wide, grey-green, harsh textured leaves. Of those species with intravaginal branching, it is immediately distinguished by wide leaves (2–10 mm wide cf. 0.5–3.0 mm wide), firm, robust panicle, and by the scattered to densely hairy lemma. Two subspecies are recognised: subsp. *pilosa* differs from subsp. *nubifera* by the longer (3.0–8.5 mm in subsp. *pilosa* cf. 0.5–3.0 mm long in subsp. *nubifera*), geniculate rather than straight awns, and by the palea, which is $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{2}{3}$ the length of lemma, rather than almost equal or equal in length.

FLOWERING

October–January

FRUITING

December–May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed and rooted pieces. A very robust grass that is easily grown and flowered in a variety of situations.

ETYMOLOGY

lachnagrostis: From “lachne” (wool) referring to the distinctive callus hairs of this genus and “agrostis” by which Trinius (1820) actually meant “a grass” (not an *Agrostis*). So the generic name means “a hairy (woolly) grass” not “a hairy (woolly) *Agrostis*” as is often incorrectly stated (see Gardner 2014).

TAXONOMIC NOTES

As currently circumscribed *Lachnagrostis pilosa* subsp. *pilosa* may comprise two taxa. Two cytotypes have been recognised (Murray et al. 2005). Morphologically the cytotypes differ in their stature and the size of their floral parts, they also have different DNA amounts (as ascertained by Flow Cytometry). Those plants with $2n = 56$ may therefore, be better treated as a different, distinct, and apparently unnamed species. Also the status of *L. pilosa* subsp. *nubifera* needs clarification, as that subspecies probably warrants species rank.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 27 June 2006. Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Edgar E, Connor HE. 2000. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Manaaki Whenua Press, Christchurch, NZ. 650 p.
- Gardner RO. 2014. Notes on the wind grass *Lachnagrostis filiformis* (Poaceae). *Auckland Botanical Society Journal* 69: 168–170.
- Murray BG, de Lange PJ, Ferguson AR. 2005. Nuclear DNA Variation, Chromosome Numbers and Polyploidy in the Endemic and Indigenous Grass Flora of New Zealand. *Annals of Botany* 96: 1293–1305.
- Trinius CB. 1820. *Fundamenta Agrostographiae*. J.G.Huebner, Vienna.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/lachnagrostis-pilosa-subsp-pilosa/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/lachnagrostis-pilosa-subsp-pilosa/>