

Poa ramosissima

SYNONYMS

Poa ramosissima var. *beta* Hook.f.

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Poa ramosissima Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

POARAM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku.

HABITAT

Coastal cliffs, usually associated with bird colonies.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial forming soft, turfy bright green, patches, arising from long, bare prostrate culms with erect apices erect. Plants leafy and much-branched; branching intravaginal; leaf-blades persistent. **Leaf-sheath** greenish brown to purplish, glabrous, hyaline, ribs prominent. **Ligule** 1.5–4.0 mm, deeply and sharply lacerate, glabrous throughout. **Leaf-blade** 40–150 × 1–2 mm, thin, weak, flat, ribs many, strong, minutely papillose-scabrid, adaxially furrowed, evenly narrowed to very finely obtuse or subobtuse tip; margins glabrous. **Culm** 10–400 mm, internodes glabrous. **Panicle** 20–100 mm, ± oblong, contracted, usually overtopped by leaves; rachis glabrous, branches erect, short, scarcely spreading, finely papillose-scabrid, bearing few spikelets. **Spikelets** 4.5–7.5 mm, 3–5-flowered, greenish brown, very minutely papillose-scabrid. **Glumes** subequal or the lower obviously shorter, both narrow-lanceolate, acute or acuminate; lower 2.5–4 mm, 1–3-nerved, upper 3.0–4.5 mm, 3-nerved. **Lemma** 3.8–5.0 mm, 5–7-nerved, elliptic, drawn out to acute or acuminate tip, mid- and lateral nerves with a few short hairs near base. **Palea** 2.5–4.5 mm, very narrow, keels with a few short hair-like prickle-teeth. **Callus** with small tufts of long, twisted hairs below midnerve of lemma and occasionally below lateral nerves. **Rachilla** 0.5–1.0 mm, glabrous. **Lodicules** 0.3–1.0 mm, occasionally hair-tipped. **Gynomonocious**: each spikelet with 1–2 lower flowers perfect, anthers 1.5–2.5 mm, gynoeceium c. 1.5 mm; upper flowers female with minute colourless anthers 0.1–0.7 mm, gynoeceium c. 1.5 mm. **Seeds** c. 1.0 × 0.5 mm.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

SIMILAR TAXA

Poa ramosissima is closely related to *Poa cookii* (Hook.f.) Hook.f. which in the New Zealand Botanical Region is only known from Macquarie Island, but also occurs on Heard and Kerguelen Islands). Both species have deeply lacerate ligules, papillose upper leaf surfaces and panicle branches, and gynomonocious flowers. From *P. cookii*, *P. ramosissima* is distinguished by its more slender than large, tufted growth habit, and by the leaf surfaces and the spikelet which are scabrid-papillose. In *P. cookii* the undersides of the leaves are glabrous and the spikelets are glabrous.

FLOWERING

November–December

FRUITING

December–March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Can be grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces. Will not flourish in warm or dry climates and dislikes humid conditions. Best in a cool spot within permanently damp—but not saturated, fertile soil.

THREATS

Not threatened. Listed because this species naturally occupies a small geographic area within which it is very common.

ETYMOLOGY

poa: Meadow grass

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

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.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/poa-ramosissima/>