

Puccinellia antipoda

COMMON NAME

Antipodes saltgrass

SYNONYMS

Atropa antipoda Petrie *Puccinellia walkeri* subsp. *antipoda* (Petrie) Edgar

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Puccinellia antipoda (Petrie) Allan et Jansen

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

PUCANT

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE, OL

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE, OL

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: OL, IE

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

.Endemic. New Zealand: Antipodes Islands

HABITAT

Mostly coastal on boulders, in peaty turf at the back of beaches, on cliff faces and rarely inland near sea bird nests and seal wallows.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect, bluish green or light green to pale brownish green, stiff, dense, very leafy tufts, 65–250 mm, with uppermost leaves usually overtopping culms; branching intravaginal. **Leaf-sheaths** straw-coloured to light grey-brown or greenish brown, smooth, firmly membranous, finely nerved; ligule 0.6–3.0 mm, obtuse or truncate, or sometimes tapered at centre and acute, smooth, entire; leaf-blades 50–250 mm long, folded and then 5–10 mm wide, or sometimes almost flat, underside smooth, upper side shallowly ridged and sparsely scabrous on ridges, margins scabrous, tip smooth, ± firmly acute, sometimes subobtuse and ± apiculate. **Culms** smooth, usually enclosed by sheaths. **Panicle** 25–80 × 4–15 mm, ± overtopped by leaves, linear-lanceolate, erect, contracted, dense; branches stiff, erect, sometimes ± spreading at maturity, smooth to sparsely scabrous, sharply acute-angled. **Spikelets** 3–9 mm, 2–5-flowered, bluish green or sometimes purplish. **Glumes** ± unequal, narrow-lanceolate to elliptic-oblong, subacute; lower glume 1.5–4.2 mm, 1–3-nerved; upper glume 2.4–5.0 mm, 3–5-nerved. **Lemma** 3–5 mm, 5–7-nerved, elliptic-oblong, midnerve slightly excurrent, apex subobtuse, ciliate scabrous, usually with a few hairs at base and on nerves near base, sometimes with hairs on nerves to c. ½ way. **Palea** < or occasionally = lemma, keels scabrous in upper ½, excurrent. **Rachilla** 0.8–1.8 mm. **Anthers** 0.6–1.5 mm. **Seed** 1.5–2.6 × 0.4–0.8 mm.



MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to the grasses of New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from both *Puccinellia chathamica* (Cheeseman) Allan et Jansen and *P. walkeri* Allan by the usually smaller growth habit, smaller panicles with sparsely scabrous, sharply acute-angled branches which remain mostly hidden among the leaves, and by the pale keels which are shortly excurrent..

FLOWERING

Unknown

FRUITING

Unknown

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Unknown.

THREATS

Naturally Uncommon, range-restricted endemic which appears to be abundant on the islands. There are no known threats. The Antipodes are administered by the New Zealand Department of Conservation as a Nature Reserve, and are listed as a World Heritage site. All landings on these islands are strictly controlled.

ETYMOLOGY

puccinellia: After the Italian botanist Benedetto Puccinelli (1808 - 1850).

antipoda: Named after the Antipodes i.e. Australia or New Zealand which are on the opposite side of the world from Europe

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

CULTURAL USE/IMPORTANCE

Edgar (1996) treated this species (and *P. chathamica*) as a subspecies of *P. walkeri*. Since then further research has elucidated that *P. chathamica* and *P. walkeri* have very different chromosome numbers and nrDNA ITS sequences, and so it is likely that *P. antipoda* will too. Subspecies rank therefore is rejected.

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/puccinellia-antipoda/>