

Puccinellia stricta

COMMON NAME

saltgrass

SYNONYMS

Atropis stricta (Hook.f.) Hack.; *Puccinellia stricta* (Hook.f.) Blom f. *stricta*;
Atropis stricta var. *suborbicularis* Hack.; *Puccinellia stricta* var.
suborbicularis (Hack.) Allan et Jansen; *Poa stricta* f. *luxurians* Allan et
Jansen; *Poa stricta* f. *pumila* Allan et Jansen

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Puccinellia stricta (Hook.f.) Blom.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

PUCSTR

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 14

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North (southwards from Auckland City, but not recorded from Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, or Taranaki), South (coastal Nelson, and on eastern to south-eastern coasts throughout, inland in Otago near Sutton, and in Central Otago), and Stewart Islands. Also Australia.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane. Salt marsh, sandy or stony ground at high tide level; inland on saline soils

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).




On Taputeranga Island, Wellington. Dec 1998.
Photographer: Barbara Mitcalfe, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Taputeranga Island, Wellington. Dec 1998.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Light bluish green or rarely pale yellow-green perennial tufts, 25–650 mm, with stiff culms and leaves, or with finer and less rigid leaves; branching intravaginal. **Leaf-sheath** smooth, submembranous to subcoriaceous, ± distinctly nerved, light brownish to purplish. **Ligule** 0.7–2.0 mm, smooth, rounded to truncate, or ± tapered at centre and acute. **Leaf-blade** 10–120 mm, involute, c. 0.5 mm diameter in rolled state, rigid and erect, or finer and softer, abaxially smooth, adaxially sparsely scabrous on nerves, or sometimes densely scabrous throughout, margins scabrous, narrowed to a fine acute tip. **Culm** 20–400 mm, enclosed by uppermost leaf-sheaths at flowering, later visible, smooth, erect. **Panicle** 20–200 × 2–55 mm, at first narrow-linear, racemose above, with few, erect, usually scabrous branches below, later more open with ± spreading branches bare at base. **Spikelets** 3.5–10.5 mm, 2–10-flowered, narrow, almost terete, light green to purplish. **Glumes** often quite unequal, elliptic-oblong, margins and sometimes midnerve minutely ciliate near tip; lower glume 0.6–2.3 mm, 1-nerved, subacute to subobtusate; upper glume 1.3–3.5 mm, 3-nerved, subobtusate to obtuse. **Lemma** 2–4 mm, 5-nerved, broad-elliptic, with very minute hairs at base not usually visible at ×10, and occasionally a few minute hairs on nerves near base, midnerve usually not quite reaching finely ciliate, obtuse tip. **Palea** slightly < lemma, bifid, keels scabrous in upper  **Rachilla** 0.5–1.0 mm. **Anthers** 0.4–1.0 mm. **Seed** 1.0–1.8 × 0.4–0.7 mm.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to the grasses of New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from other *Puccinellia* by the intravaginal new shoots; involute leaves; panicle overtopping leaves; upper glume usually 2.0–3.5 mm; lemma with minute hairs near base visible only at high magnification (c. ×40); palea keels finely scabrous. Differentiating between *Puccinellia stricta* and *Puccinellia walkeri* (which sometime co-occur) can be difficult: the size of the lemma (3–5mm in *P. walkeri*, usually \leq 3mm in *P. stricta*) is a good guide. The panicle of *P. stricta* also tends to open out post-flowering so that obvious branches are visible rather than remaining closely and erectly branched. The palea keel in *P. stricta* is scabrid but is ciliate in *P. walkeri* (though, this difference can be small).

FLOWERING

September–December

FRUITING

October–March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from seed and by division of established plants.

THREATS

Not Threatened but uncommon north of the Waikato.

ETYMOLOGY

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

stricta: From the Latin strictus 'upright, stiff'

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

ATTRIBUTION

Description from Edgar and Connor (2000).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Edgar E. 1996. *Puccinellia* Part. (Gramineae: Poeae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 34: 17–32.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/puccinellia-stricta/>