

Stenostachys gracilis

SYNONYMS

Gymnostichum gracile Hook.f.; *Hystrix gracilis* (Hook.f.) Kuntze; *Asprella gracilis* (Hook.f.) Kirk; *Cockayneae gracilis* (Hook.f.) Zotov; *Stenostachys narduroides* Turcz.; *Elymus narduroides* (Turcz.) Á.Löve et Connor; *Agropyron subeglume* P.Candargy

FAMILY

Poaceae

AUTHORITY

Stenostachys gracilis (Hook.f.) Connor

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

Yes

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

NVS CODE

STEGRC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DP

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Data Deficient

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North, South and Stewart Islands. Uncommon north of the Central Volcanic Plateau.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane (0-1000 m a.s.l.). In estuarine habitats, at gully and valley heads, on clay banks and along stream sides in tall forest. Also in shrublands. occasionally found in tussock grassland.



Spikelet, Doughboy Bay Stewart Island.
Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken:
26/01/2021, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Flowering spikelet, Doughboy Bay Stewart
Island. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken:
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial, stoloniferous, green, glaucous or yellow-green grass forming open to densely tufted, wide somewhat flat-leaved patches with long nodding inflorescences; often very stout in forested areas. **Leaf-sheath** 50–150 mm, with long (0.5–1.0 mm) hairs irregularly retrorse or erect, occasionally glabrate or glabrous. **Auricles** to 0.5 mm or minute, scarcely clasping. **Ligule** 0.3–1.0 mm, erose. **Leaf-blade** 100–200 × 1.5–2.0 mm, flat, thin, usually with hairs 0.5–1.0 mm or bearing sparse prickle-teeth above and glabrous below; margins glabrous. **Culm** 0.7–1.2 m long, slender, nodes evident sometimes ± geniculate, internodes glabrous. **Inflorescence** slender, narrow 100–300 mm, glaucous or somewhat powdery greyish white, comprised of 15–40 spikelets > internodes; internodes 2–5 mm but longer at base; rachis prolongation 2–6 mm. **Spikelets** to 10 mm, of 1–3 forests, on 1.0–1.5 mm stipes in the absence of glumes; rachilla prolongation 1.5–3.0 mm, conspicuously short stiffly hairy. **Glumes** 0, sometimes 1–2 and awn-like, 0–3 mm, very rarely 5–6 mm above, 1-nerved, prickle-toothed, much less than spikelets in length. **Lemma** 7–10 mm, prickle-teeth abundant, weakly keeled, infrequently bifid at apex, canalculated above, tapering to awn 1.5–6.0 mm. **Palea** 5–7 mm, < lemma, apex usually prolonged or retuse; keels toothed and usually inrolled. **Callus** short, 0.5 mm, surrounded by abundant short stiff hairs; disarticulation ± oblique. **Rachilla** 1.5–2.5 mm, shortly prickle-toothed. **Lodicules** 0.75–1.00 mm. **Anthers** 1.5–2.0 mm, often retained as a remnant surmounting the seed apex. **Ovary** 1.25–1.40 mm; stigma-styles 1.5–2.0 mm. **Seed** 4.00–4.25 mm. **Flowers** mostly cleistogamous.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *S. deceptorix* Connor and *S. laevis* (Petrie) Connor by the mixtures of minute, absent or awn-like glumes in the inflorescence (rather than solely awn-like), and by the lemma which is conspicuously prickle-toothed rather than mostly smooth or sparingly prickle-toothed.

FLOWERING

September–January

FRUITING

November–May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces. Prefers a semi-shaded site, planted in damp soil. Very attractive when in flower and fruit.

THREATS

Not Threatened. However, scarce north of the Bay of Plenty and Waikato.

ETYMOLOGY

gracilis: Slender

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/stenostachys-gracilis/>