



Paspalum orbiculare

Common Name(s):

Scrobic, Native Paspalum

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Declining

Distribution:

Indigenous. Known only from the Kermadec Islands and North Island of New Zealand. In the North Island it occurs from Northland to Raglan Harbour in the west and Whale Island in the Bay of Plenty. Common in the wider Pacific and Australia

Habitat:

Coastal to lowland, in seasonal wetlands (often with *Baumea juncea*), on lake margins, in gumland scrub, along track sides and near or around active geothermal vents

Features*:

Perennial grass. Leaves stiffly erect. Leaf sheath subcoriaceous, striate, strongly keeled, brown to purple-brown or red, glabrescent. Ligule 1-2 mm, truncate, entire. Leaf-blade 100-200 (-300) x 3.5-5 mm, flat, rigid, midrib distinct, upper surface glabrous, undersides pilose hairy near ligule. Culm (200-)350-700 mm, erect, compressed, internodes glabrous, striate. Panicle erect, 60-120 mm, with 3-8 erect to slightly spreading racemes. Racemes (20-)30-40 mm, 1.2-1.7 mm wide, with short white hairs at base, bearing 2 rows of single to paired, sessile spikelets. Spikelets 2-2.5 mm, imbricate, ovoid-elliptic to ovoid-orbicular, glabrous, obtuse, light brown. Lower glume 0, upper = spikelet, 3(-5)-nerved, glabrous. Lower floret 3-5-nerved, glabrous. Upper floret elliptic-orbicular, glossy, brown. Flowers with anthers 1 mm, if bearing pollen then yellow, usually brown due to malformed pollen, stigmas purple, seed > 1mm.

Flowering:

May flower throughout the year but most plants can be found in flower from August - April

Fruiting:

Seed may be present at anytime of the year but it is most commonly found from September - July

Threats:

Formerly widespread from Te Pahi south to the Bay of Plenty. This species is now scarce south of Auckland City, and has its strongholds on Great Barrier Island and in the far North. It seems to be threatened by other taller, faster growing grass and shrub species, though exact data on the nature or mechanism of its decline is not available. Some populations have been lost accidentally through failure to recognise its indigenous status, or by revegetation projects using taller native species which eventually shading out this grass.

*Attribution:

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2009). Description based on Edgar & Connor (2000). See also comments by de Lange & Murray (2002).

References and further reading:

Cameron, E.K. 1998. *Paspalum orbiculare* an adventive addition to the Waitakeres. *Auckland Botanical Society Journal* 53: 40-42.

de Lange, P.J.; Murray, B.G. 2002: Contributions to a chromosome atlas of the New Zealand flora—37. Miscellaneous families. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 40: 1-23

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=189



Caption: Green Bay, Auckland. Apr 2007.

Photographer: Peter de Lange



Caption: Green Bay, Auckland. Apr 2007.

Photographer: Peter de Lange