



Rytidosperma horrens

Common Name(s):

bristle grass

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. South Island, upper Maitland Catchment, Lake Ohau

Habitat:

Subalpine (1200 m a.s.l.). Recorded from wet flushes and tarn margins where it is a sparse to locally common component of short, dense, vegetation.

Features*:

Diminutive, tufted, bright green tussock with persistent, stramineous leaves below shoots of 3-4 conspicuously divergent leaf blades. Branching intravaginal. Leaf-sheath 10-15 mm, glabrous, ridged, becoming stramineous; collar thickened, paler beneath sheath; apical tuft 0.5-1.5 mm, sparse. Ligule a very narrow row of hairs c.0.25 mm long. Leaf-blade 25-30 x 0.5 mm, iÀ terete; persistent, weakly disarticulating at ligule; glabrous below except keel hairy apically; upper surface with numerous small white prickles on nerves; margin glabrous. Culm to 120 mm, internodes 40-60 mm. Inflorescence racemose of 2-5, widely spaced, solitary, overlapping spikelets on very finely toothed pedicels 2-5 mm long, rachis very finely toothed. Spikelets 6-8 mm long, 3-5 florets in each; awns exserted. Glumes equal, iÀ ovate-acute 5-6 mm, glabrous, bright green centrally, margins hyaline sometimes tinged purple below, faintly toothed above, apex finely ciliate, nerves confluent; upper 5-nerved, lower 3-nerved, upper surface with abundant small, white hairs. Lemma 2 mm, bright green, 7-nerved, nerves anastomising below sinus; upper row of hairs only in marginal tufts, 0.75 mm, iÝ sinus, 0.5 mm, not reaching upper marginal tufts, other glabrous; lemma lobes 1.5-2.5 mm, iÝ lemma, abruptly produced into 1.0-1.5 mm long awns, reflexed from twisting column 1 mm. Callus 0.25 mm, rounded, marginal hair tufts 0.4-0.5 mm, hairs 1-2 = to lodicule; nerved, cuneate and lobed. Anthers 0.7-1.0 mm, yellow, apiculate, exserted. Ovary 0.5-0.8 mm, obovoid, stipitate, stigma-style 1.20-1.75 mm, exserted. Seed 1.40-1.50 x 0.75 mm, obovate.

Flowering:

January

Fruiting:

April

Threats:

Recent (2009) surveys have found *Rytidosperma horrens* to be locally common over a large area west of Lake Ohau. In future listings this species is likely to be regarded as Naturally Uncommon.

***Attribution:**

Description modified from Molloy and Connor (2005).

References and further reading:

Molloy, B.P.J.; Connor, H.E. 2005: Species novae graminum Novae-Zelandiae III. Two diploid species of *Rytidosperma* (Danthonieae: Danthonioideae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 43: 721-734.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2313