



Chionochloa acicularis

Common Name(s):

Needle Snow Tussock

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (South Westland and Fiordland).

Habitat:

Lowland to upper montane. On peaty soils in grasslands, and scattered through scrub

Features*:

Tall, slender, erect, pedicelled tussock, with sharp-pointed, glabrous, deciduous leaves. Leaf-sheath to 120 mm, dark above, pale shining below, persistent, becoming chartaceous, keeled, clothed with long (3 mm) abundant deciduous hairs, apical tuft of hairs to 7 mm. Ligule to 0.5 mm. Leaf-blade to 500 × 1 mm diameter, acicular rush-like, thickened at midrib, disarticulating at ligule, abaxially glabrous, adaxially with dense very short stiff hairs below, papillae and occasionally some prickle-teeth above; margin smooth. Culm to 600 mm, long and short hairs below inflorescence otherwise glabrous. Inflorescence to 100 mm, spikelets few; rachis, branches and pedicels abundantly long hairy especially at branch axils. Spikelets of up to 7 golden florets. Glumes becoming acute or mucronate, glabrous, > adjacent lemma lobes; lower to 11 mm, 3-nerved, upper to 13 mm, 5-nerved. Lemma to 5 mm; dense hairs at margin and erect hairs aside central nerve or rarely between all nerves, ± reaching sinus; lateral lobes to 4 mm, triangular-acute; central awn to 14 mm from divergent flat column to 2 mm. Palea to 7 mm. Callus to 1 mm, hairs to 2.5 mm. Rachilla to 0.5 mm. Lodicules to 1 mm. Anthers to 4 mm. Ovary to 0.8 mm; stigma-styles to 2 mm. Seeds to 3 mm.

Flowering:

October - December

Fruiting:

November - February

Threats:

A naturally uncommon, regional endemic.

*Attribution:

Description modified from Edgar and Connor (200)

References and further reading:

Edgar, E.; Connor, H.E. 2000: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Christchurch, Manaaki Whenua Press. 650 pp.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 11: 285-309

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=436



Caption: Franklin Mountains, Fiordland

Photographer: John Barkla



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