



Chionochloa antarctica

Common Name(s):

Snow Tussock

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: Auckland and Campbell Islands.

Habitat:

Dominant of tussock grassland across islands. Also in cushion bogs

Features*:

Tall, slender, often peat-stained, pale tussock with pungent leaves often spirally twisting above and deciduous. Leaf-sheath to 200 mm, dark above, pale shining below, persistent, glabrous though often with many very short hairs between ribs. Ligule to 2 mm. Leaf-blades to 300 × 6 mm, flat or U-shaped, disarticulating at ligule, abaxially many glabrous ribs, adaxially below with interlocking hairs from near margins, abundant papillae above; margin glabrous. Culm to 1 m, internodes glabrous. Inflorescence to 150 mm, congested, ± triangular, glabrous except for long hairs at branch axils and below spikelets. Spikelets of up to 7 lightly purpled florets. Glumes sometimes purpled, acute or shortly awned, < adjacent lemma lobes; lower to 12 mm, 1-nerved or shortly 3-nerved, upper to 15 mm, 3-5-nerved, margin consistently long hairy below otherwise glabrous. Lemma to 8 mm; hairs dense at margin and aside central nerve, sometimes in other internerves but then fewer, ± reaching sinus; lateral lobes to 7 mm including awn to 3 mm or long triangular-acute; central awn to 20 mm reflexed from flat column up to 3 mm. Palea to 10 mm. Callus to 1 mm, hairs to 3 mm. Rachilla to 1 mm. Lodicules to 0.75 mm. Anthers to 3.5 mm. Ovary to 0.75 mm; stigma-styles to 4 mm. Seed to 2.5 mm

Flowering:

October - December

Fruiting:

November - March

Threats:

Not Threatened. Widespread and common within its island habitats. Listed only because by world standards it is a naturally uncommon plant biologically limited only by the extent of area it can occupy

*Attribution:

Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000).

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=437



Caption: Campbell Island

Photographer: John Barkla



Caption: Campbell Island

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