



Chionochloa bromoides

Common Name(s):

Coastal Tussock, Seabird Tussock

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. North Island where virtually confined to northern offshore islands and easterly headlands from the Bay of Islands south to the Poor Knights, Chickens and Mokohinau Islands. One westerly outlier occurs at Maunganui Bluff.

Habitat:

Coastal on cliff faces, bluffs, rock stacks, and in petrel scrub. Well established plants often have their bases heavily burrowed by sea birds such as diving petrels.

Features*:

Gynodioecious, stout, pendent often sprawling, bright green tussock with persistent leaves and sheaths. Leaf-sheath to 150 mm, shining yellow, keeled, persistent and entire, becoming fibrous, margin abundantly long hairy below, apical tuft of hairs to 4 mm; adaxially with many minute interrib hairs. Ligule to 1.5 mm. Leaf-blade to 500 × 10 mm, flat or shallowly U-shaped, smooth, persistent, adaxially glabrous except for long hairs on margin below and some short or long hairs, sometimes dense, at base. Culm to 700 mm, internodes glabrous. Inflorescence to 200 mm, very congested; rachis and main branches glabrous but with some long hairs at axils; pedicels short and densely hairy. Spikelets of up to 6 florets. Glumes acute or slightly awned, < adjacent lemma lobes, many prickle-teeth abaxially and a few adaxially; lower to 12 mm, 1-3-nerved, upper to 16 mm, 5-nerved. Lemma to 9 mm; hairs dense at margin and in all internerves though sometimes absent from all or some, less than or equal to sinus, prickle-teeth abundant abaxially and adaxially on lobes and margins; lateral lobes to 5 mm including awn to 3 mm or acute, rarely dividing from awn at sinus; central awn to 22 mm from indistinct straight column. Palea to 10 mm, prickle-teeth abaxially and on flanks. Callus to 1.5 mm, hairs to 5 mm. Rachilla to 0.5 mm. Lodicules to 1.75 mm. Anthers to 5.5 mm in male-fertile flowers, up to 3 mm in male-sterile flowers. Male-fertile flowers with stigmas to 3.5 mm, ovary to 1.5 mm, and male-sterile flowers to 5 mm, ovary 1.5 mm. Seeds to 3.5 mm.

Flowering:

September - December

Fruiting:

November - March

Threats:

Not Threatened. Listed because it is a naturally uncommon, regional endemic.

*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=439



Caption: Central Valley mouth, Fanal Island

Photographer: Peter de Lange



Caption: Maunganui Bluff (November)

Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth