



Chionochloa crassiuscula subsp. *crassiuscula*

Common Name(s):

pungent snow tussock

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Habitat:

Upper montane, subalpine or alpine. Usually in herbfields where it may be the dominant species. Also boggy meadows, and scrub.

Features*:

Short, stout, robust tussocks with smooth, pungent, straight, deciduous leaves, which leave many imbricate old sheaths. Leaf-sheath to 80 mm, glabrous, pale or dark brown, shining above, darkened below, sometimes purpled or reddened, persistent, entire, compressed, sometimes apical tuft of hairs to 1 mm. Ligule to 1 mm long. Leaf-blade to 300 × 6 mm, coriaceous, curved and keeled, shortly tapering to very pungent apex, upper surface with abundant prickle-teeth at base, disarticulating at ligule, abaxially glabrous except for prickle-teeth towards apex, adaxially papillate but with some prickle-teeth especially near ligule; margin thickened, long hairs below or sometimes with prickle-teeth. Culm to 65 cm, often purpled, often hairy below inflorescence.

Inflorescence to 15 cm, open, pulvinate; spikelets often paired on flexuous branches; rachis, branches and pedicels with mixed long and short hairs or rachis hairy on margins only. Spikelets of up to 7 golden florets. Glumes thin, purpled, acute or mucronate from between teeth or aristate to erose, greater than or equal to adjacent lemma lobes; lower to 12 mm, shortly 1-3-nerved, glabrous, upper to 16 mm, 5-7-nerved, margin often long hairy below otherwise glabrous. Lemma to 4.5 mm, shining; hairs dense on margin and aside central nerve, sparse or absent elsewhere < sinus; lateral lobes to 6.5 mm including awn to 3 mm, or triangular-acute or long acute; central awn to 12 mm slightly twisting and markedly reflexed from flat column to 2 mm. Palea to 7 mm. Callus to 1 mm, hairs to 2.5 mm. Rachilla to 1.5 mm. Lodicules to 2 mm. Anthers to 4 mm. Ovary to 0.75 mm; stigma-styles to 3.5 mm. Seed to 3 mm

Flowering:

November - January

Fruiting:

December - April

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=440



Caption: Table Hill, Stewart Island

Photographer: Kelvin Lloyd



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