



Poa polyphylla

Common Name(s):

Kermadec Islands Poa

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: Raoul and Macauley Islands, Kermadec Islands group

Habitat:

On coastal cliffs, near seepages or in exposed ground near petrel burrows, also on roadside banks on Raoul Island.

Features*:

Loosely tufted, widely creeping, perennial with trailing culms up to 0.8 m; culms equalled or overtopped by numerous dull green, leaves and stems drooping from thick stolons, rooting at nodes below tufts; branching extravaginal, with up to three, short, glabrous, obtuse, bract-like sheaths at base; leaf-blades persistent. Leaf-sheath light green to light brown, coriaceous, folded and strongly keeled, lateral ribs conspicuous, smooth, glabrous. Ligule 0.5 mm, a truncate usually long-ciliate rim, scabrid abaxially. Leaf-blade 65.0-200.0 × 1.0-2.5 mm, coriaceous, folded to flat, upper surface densely minutely papillose or glabrous, smooth between inconspicuous ribs, minutely pubescent-scabrid just above ligule, undersides with prominent, thickened midrib, and numerous, distinct lateral ribs, smooth apart from prickle-teeth near tip; margins sparsely ciliate near ligule and scabrid near tip, otherwise thickened, tip acuminate or abruptly acute, pungent, scabrid. Culm 70-700 mm, often not far exerted beyond uppermost leaf-sheath, internodes glabrous. Panicle 35-150 mm, contracted, ± oblong, with few, stiff, erect branches, or slightly more open with finer branches; rachis and primary branches often smooth, secondary branchlets finely, sharply, densely or sparsely scabrid or smooth, often spikelet-bearing ± throughout. Spikelets numerous, 4.5-5.5 mm, 3-4-flowered, light green. Glumes subequal, narrow- to elliptic-lanceolate, acute to subobtuse, occasionally smooth throughout, or upper 2/3 scabrid; lower glume 2.0-3.5 mm, 1-3-nerved, upper glume 2.5-5.0 mm, 3-nerved. Lemma 3.0-4.5 mm, 5-nerved, elliptic-oblong, acute or occasionally apiculate, internerves glabrous, midnerve with short crinkled hairs on lower 1/2 and near base of outer lateral nerves; margins minutely scabrid. Palea 2.5-4.0 mm, keels finely scabrid, interkeel and flanks smooth or minutely scabrid. Callus with thick tuft of soft crinkled hairs. Rachilla c.0.5 mm, smooth or minutely, sparsely scabrid; prolongation c. twice as long. Lodicules c.0.5 mm, occasionally hair-tipped. Anthers c.1.5 mm. Seed 1.5 × 0.5 mm.

Flowering:

September - January

Fruiting:

November - May

Threats:

Not Threatened. Listed because it is a narrow range endemic to the Kermadec Islands group. It is abundant on Raoul but scarce on Macauley Island

*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.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=631



Caption: Raoul Island

Photographer: Bec Stanley



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