



Puccinellia walkeri

Common Name(s):

Walkers Saltgrass

Current Threat Status (2012):

Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: South (Cook Strait (Brothers Islands), thence from Banks Peninsula to Riverton) and Stewart Islands

Habitat:

On small islets and rock stacks (especially near sea bird nests) and in salt meadow, salt marsh and on saline ground in estuaries; also on sandy and stony ground at high tide level.

Features*:

Erect, bluish green or light green to pale brownish green, stiff, dense, very leafy tufts, 95-500 mm, with uppermost leaves usually overtopping culms; branching intravaginal. Leaf-sheaths straw-coloured to light greenish brown or grey-brown, sometimes purplish smooth, firmly membranous, finely nerved; ligule 0.6-3.0 mm, obtuse or truncate, or sometimes tapered at centre and acute, smooth, entire; leaf-blades 50-250 mm long, folded and then 5-10 mm wide, or sometimes almost flat, undersides smooth, upper shallowly ridged and sparsely scabrous on ridges, margins scabrous, tip smooth, ± firmly acute, sometimes subobtuse and ± apiculate. Culms smooth, usually enclosed by sheaths. Panicle 30-170 × 5-110 mm, initially overtopped by leaves usually expanding well above them at maturity, linear-lanceolate, erect, contracted, dense; branches stiff, erect, acute-angled and scabrous, spreading at maturity. Spikelets 3-9 mm, 2-5-flowered, bluish green or sometimes purplish. Glumes ± unequal, narrow-lanceolate to elliptic-oblong, subacute; lower glume 1.5-4.2 mm, 1-3-nerved; upper glume 2-5 mm, 3-5-nerved. Lemma 3-5 mm, 5-7-nerved, elliptic-oblong, apex subobtuse to obtuse, midnerve not excurrent, apex minutely ciliate-scabrous, otherwise with a few hairs on basal nerves and at base, sometimes with hairs on nerves to c.1/2 way. Palea < or occasionally = lemma, keels scabrous in upper 1/2-2/3, reaching only to palea-tip. Rachilla 0.8-1.8 mm. Anthers 0.6-1.5 mm. Seed 1.5-2.6 × 0.4-0.8 mm.

Flowering:

October - December

Fruiting:

November - January (seed is absent in some populations)

Threats:

Naturally Uncommon, range-restricted, sparse endemic. Very little is known about its ecology, and at least some populations appear to be sterile. However no obvious threats are known and the species is abundant in the southern part of its range.

***Attribution:**

Description modified from Edgar (1996).

References and further reading:

Edgar, E. 1996: *Puccinellia* Part. (Gramineae: Poeae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 34: 17-32.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=651