

Austrostipa blackii



Austrostipa blackii.
Tasmanian Herbarium specimen.

FAMILY: POACEAE

BOTANICAL NAME: *Austrostipa blackii*,
(C.E.Hubb.) S.W.L.Jacobs & J.Everett,
Telopea 6(4): 584 (1996)

COMMON NAME: Crested spear grass

COMMONWEALTH STATUS: (*EPBC Act*)
Not Listed

TASMANIAN STATUS: (*TSP Act*) rare

Description

A tufted, perennial grass up to 1.3 metres tall. **Stem:** The stems are circular, ribbed, smooth and hairless and may be silky on the ends just below the nodes (stem joints). **Leaves:** The blades are up to 45 cm long and 3 mm wide (when flattened), inrolled and rough to the touch, bearing stiff, bristle-like hairs. The sheaths surrounding the base of the leaves are finely ribbed. The lower sheaths are rough and hairy with the upper sheaths being smooth and hairless. **Seedheads (panicle):** The panicle is up to 25 cm long and few-flowered. The branches and flower stalks are covered with tiny rough hairs and are rough to the touch. **Spikelets (units of the seedhead):** The leaf-like structures that surround the spikelets (glumes) are unequal with sparse tiny hairs and expanded around the floret tapering towards the top. The point of the glume is clear. The lower glume is longer than the upper glume. Flowering is predominantly from November to January (Flora of Victoria). **Seed cover (lemma):** The seed cover is smooth towards the bottom and covered in tiny hairs towards the top, which are white and approximately 1 mm long – they are longer towards the base of the seed cover. The long hair-like structure protruding from the seed cover (awn) is around 35-48 mm long (description from Curtis & Morris 1994). Herbarium specimens have been collected from October to March. **This species was previously known as *Stipa blackii*.**

Distribution and Habitat

On the mainland this species occurs in Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria. In Tasmania, *Austrostipa blackii* occurs along the East Coast in open woodlands up to an altitude of 100 metres. It has also been more recently recorded from the Furneaux Group on Chalky Island (Curtis & Morris 1994, Tasmanian Herbarium data 2002).

Key Sites and Populations

Austrostipa blackii has populations within the Beaumaris, Elderslie, Richmond and St. Helens regions.

Known Reserves

This species is reserved in the Scamander Conservation Area.

Ecology and Management

Wind is the most likely pollination vector for this species (A. Hingston pers. comm.).

Conservation Status Assessment

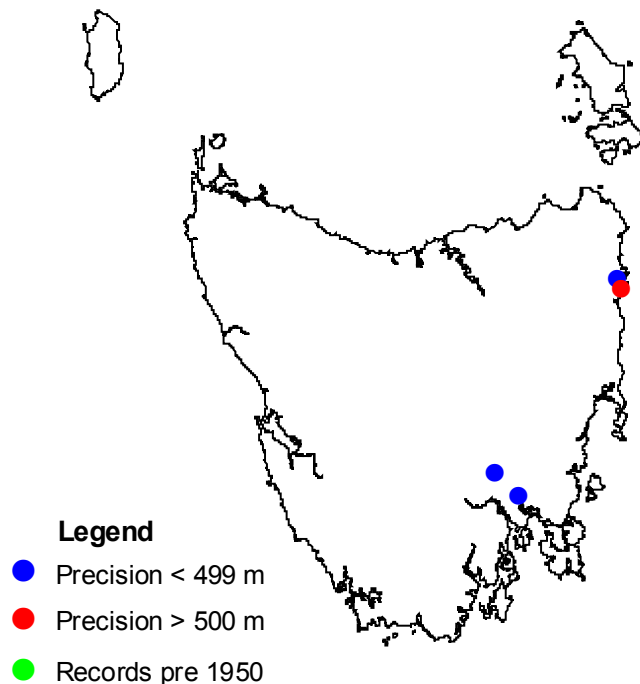
There is not enough information available to enable a meaningful reassessment of *Austrostipa blackii*.

Further Information

- Curtis, WM & Morris, DI 1994, *The Student's Flora of Tasmania*, Part 4B, Printing Authority of Tasmania, Hobart.

Tasmanian Distribution

(As per Threatened Species Unit records, June 2003)



1:25 000 Map Sheets

Beaumaris, Elderslie, Richmond, St Helens.

Date last modified: 02/09/03