

Threatened Species

Poa sallacustris – Salt-lake Tussock-grass

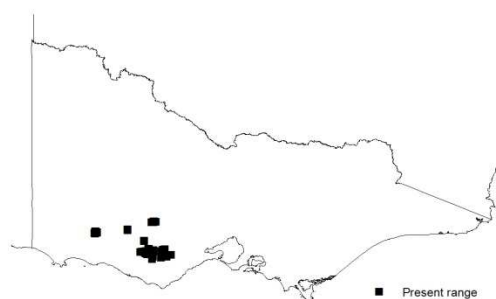
Description

The Salt-lake Tussock-grass (*Poa sallacustris*) is a perennial, mat-forming grass that reaches a height of 30cm when flowering. The leaf blades are up to 12cm in length and are smooth, hairless and end in a sharp point. The flower head consists of 4-6 flowered spikelets.

Distribution

The Salt-lake Tussock-grass is endemic to Victoria and can be found at 18 locations. The Salt-lake Tussock-grass can be found in a range of habitats including in horizontal bands on the edges of saline and brackish lakes, in grassland and herbfield vegetation communities, on flat to slightly hilly areas, and can occur in a variety of sediments from grey to black clay soils, sandy clays and coxiella shell beds (tiny salt water snail shells).

Salt-lake Tussock-grass can grow in circular mats up to five metres in diameter, or in a long band along the lake edge and shore. In winter the grass is bright green in colour while in spring, summer and autumn the grass is a straw yellow colour, quite distinct from other vegetation in its habitat. The extent of range and abundance of Salt-lake Tussock-grass prior to European settlement is unknown.



Salt-lake Tussock-grass.

Conservation Status

Salt-lake Tussock-grass is listed as 'Vulnerable' under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, is listed as threatened in Victoria under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and is considered 'Vulnerable' in Victoria according to DELWP's *Advisory List of Rare or Threatened Plants in Victoria 2014*.

Poa sallacustris – Salt-lake Tussock-grass

Threats

Potential threats to Salt-lake Tussock-grass are:

- Weed invasion
- Risk of extinction due to small population size
- Impacts from climate change such as reduced rainfall, resulting in alterations to lake water levels and ground water levels and salinity
- Heavy grazing
- Salinity control measures i.e. establishment of tall wheat grass (*Thinopyrum ponticum*) and planting of trees on grassland habitat
- Lack of knowledge of the species requirements
- Conversion of areas to cropping



Salt-lake Tussock-grass patch turning yellow in colour in spring.

Existing conservation actions

Management actions carried out for Salt-lake Tussock-grass include:

- Annual population monitoring
- Assessing and managing threats
- Seed collection for storage in the seed bank at the Royal Botanic Gardens
- Weed and biomass control
- Recording any new sites found
- Community involvement and awareness.

Help threatened species

- Contact DELWP to report sightings of threatened species.
- Get involved with your local volunteer group, LandCare, CoastCare, Field Naturalists or Friends of Group.

For more information contact your local DELWP staff or visit the DELWP website at www.delwp.vic.gov.au

For more information about threatened species in southwest Victoria and current projects, visit www.swifft.net.au/

© The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2015



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia licence. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria as author. The licence does not apply to any images, photographs or branding, including the Victorian Coat of Arms, the Victorian Government logo and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning logo. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/deed.en>

Photos by Ammie Jackson

Accessibility

If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format, please telephone DELWP Customer Service Centre 136 186, email customer.service@delwp.vic.gov.au, via the National Relay Service on 133 677 www.relayservice.com.au. This document is also available on the internet at www.delwp.vic.gov.au

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.