

Identification of Serrated Tussock

Leaves

Serrated tussock leaves are up to 50 cm long, are thin and roll smoothly between your thumb and index finger (as shown), most native species leaves are folded and feel as though they have flat edges, so don't roll easily. Serrated tussock leaves have fine serrations that can be felt if the finger and thumb are carefully drawn from the tip of the leaf towards the base of the plant.



Photo: Chelsea Wardrope



Photo: DPI, Victoria

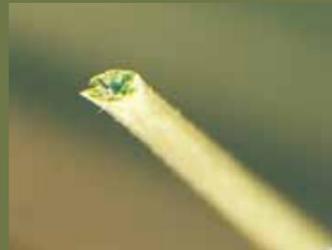


Photo: DPI, Victoria



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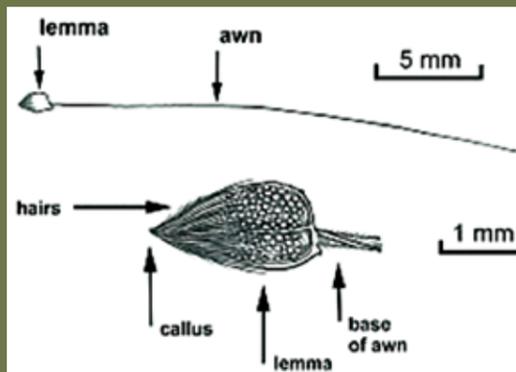
Notice the cylindrical cross-section of serrated tussock due to the leaf blade being tightly rolled (far left), as opposed to the 'V' shape of the native (Silver) tussock (left).

The Ligule

Serrated tussock has a small, (1 mm long) white, hairless ligule. The ligule can be found at the junction where the leaf meets the stem. To find the ligule, trace a leaf down towards the base of the plant to where it meets with the stem (junction). Carefully separate the leaf from the stem by bending the leaf backwards. The ligule of serrated tussock is white and has a rounded tip. Similar looking native grasses have smaller, differently shaped or hair-fringed ligules.



Photo: DPI, Victoria



Seeds

Serrated tussock seeds are 1.5-2 mm long and enclosed in two reddish-brown or purple bracts (glumes) which are 6-10 mm long and taper to a point. The seed itself has a tuft of short, white hairs at one end and a twisted awn at the other. In Victoria, the awn can be up to 35 mm long, in other states it is about 25 mm long.

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Nassella trichotoma



Photo: Chelsea Wardrope

Spring/Summer



Photo: DPI, Victoria

Serrated tussock turns a lime green colour in warmer months where most other native species yellow. It sets seed from October to March and seeds will easily germinate in bare ground where there are no competitive perennial pastures or native grasses.

Autumn/Winter



Photo: DPI, Victoria

Serrated tussock is bleached in late autumn and winter by frosts and cooler weather turning a golden yellow colour.

For more information go to www.serratedtussock.com or call the Department of Primary Industries on 136 186.

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Pest Species *Nassella* Species

Native Grasses

Whole plant

Flower and seed head

Leafblade and ligule