

# *Sporobolus virginicus*



*Sporobolus virginicus*.  
Tasmanian Herbarium specimen.

**FAMILY:** POACEAE

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Sporobolus virginicus*,  
(L.) Kunth, *Revis. Gram.* 67 (1829)

**COMMON NAME:** Salt couch

**COMMONWEALTH STATUS:** (EPBC Act)  
Not Listed

**TASMANIAN STATUS:** (TSP Act) delisted  
from rare April 2016

## Description

A perennial grass that creeps along the ground or tends erect, up to 40 cm high. **Underground parts:** The underground parts consist of stout creeping horizontal stem with scales. The vegetative and flowering shoots arise singly from the underground stems and are branching above. **Leaves:** The lower leaves are undeveloped, arising as shining pale sheaths. The upper leaves are arranged more or less in two opposite rows and are finely grooved. The blades are up to 7 cm long, inrolled, more or less rigid, and erect or semi-erect. **Stems:** The stems are circular in cross-section, smooth and branched. **Seedhead:** The seedhead is between 1-6 cm long, projected from or enclosed in the uppermost leaf sheath. They are lead-coloured with the branches rigidly erect and pressed closely together. **Spikelets (units of the seedhead):** The spikelets are between 2-2.5 mm long (description from Curtis & Morris 1994). Flowering is from September to March (Flora of Victoria).

## Distribution and Habitat

On the mainland this species occurs in every State. It is also known from New Zealand, Pacific Islands, West Indies, Africa, India, China and Indonesia. In Tasmania, *Sporobolus virginicus* inhabits salt marshes and sand hills near the North-east Coast and through the Furneaux Islands.

## Key Sites and Populations

Key sites for this species include Outer Sister Island, West Sister Island, Low Head (east beach), Craggy Island, Refuge Island, West Double Sandy Point near Bridport, Badger Head, near George Town, Coles Bay, Dianas Basin south of St. Helens, Georges Bay in St Helens, Grants Lagoon near the Bay of Fires and Piccaninny Point.

### **Known Reserves**

Reserved in the Bay of Fires Conservation Area, Clarke Island Nature Reserve, Double Sandy Point Conservation Area, Freycinet National Park, Mount William National Park, Musselroe Bay Conservation Area, Narawntapu National Park, Sister Islands Conservation Area, Southwest Conservation Area and the Waterhouse Conservation Area.

### **Ecology and Management**

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

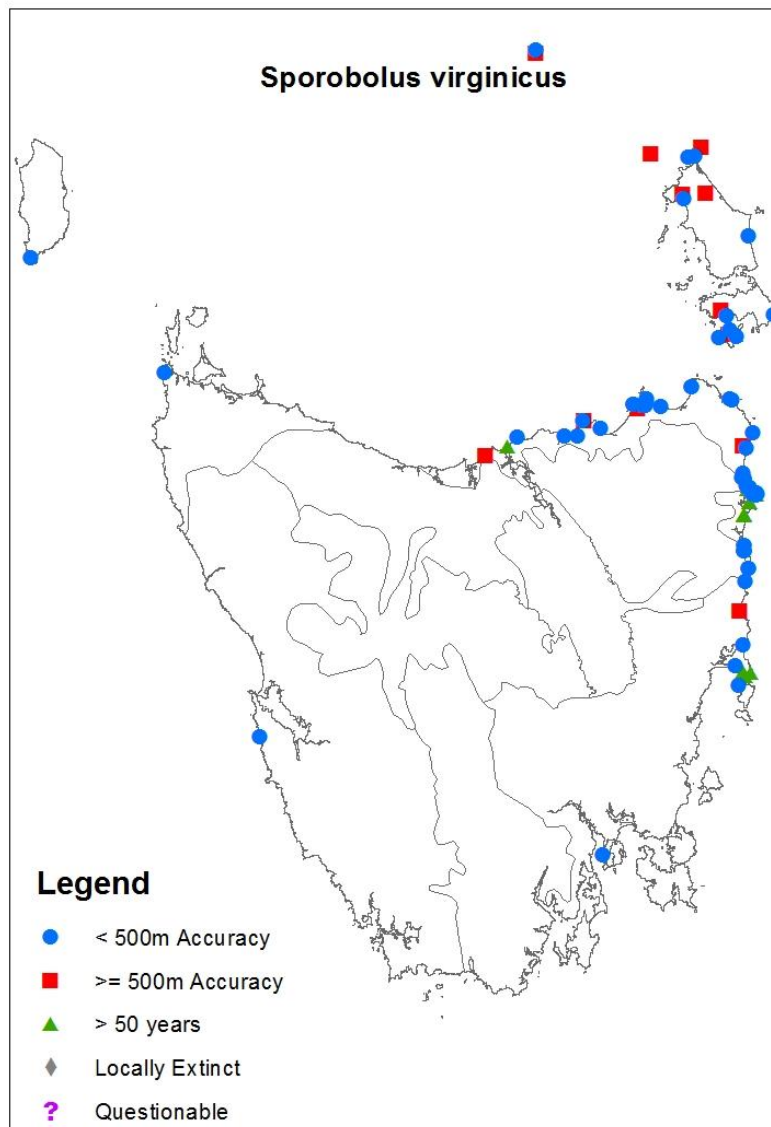
### **Conservation Status Assessment**

Due to its widespread distribution and large number of populations and individuals resulting from new observations since the time of listing, the conservation status of *Sporobolus virginicus* was reassessed, resulting in the species being delisted from schedules of the *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* in April 2016.

### **Further Information**

- Curtis, WM & Morris, DI 1994, *The Student's Flora of Tasmania*, Part 4B, Printing Authority of Tasmania, Hobart.
- Jessop, JP & Toelken, HR 1986, *Flora of South Australia, Part IV (Alismataceae to Orchidaceae)*, South Australian Printing Division, Adelaide.

**Tasmanian Distribution (showing IBRA bioregions)**  
(As per Threatened Species Section records, May 2015)



Date last modified: 4/5/2016

**Contact details**

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