



Friends of Venus Bay Peninsula Inc

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Plant of the month: Tussock Grass *Poa labillardierei* var. *labillardierei*



Tussock Grass *Poa labillardierei* is a large densely tufted tussock with leaves usually at least half as high as the culms or flowering stems. The dull green leaf blades have a rough feel, grow up to 80 cm long and are channeled or sometimes flat. The culms are up to 1.2 metres tall and the inflorescence or flowering heads occur in an open pyramid shape up to 25 cm long, from October to February. Tussock Grass is common on moist soils throughout most of Victoria. Coast Tussock Grass *Poa poiformis* also grows at Venus Bay and has leaves almost as long as the flowering stems. *Poa labillardierei* is the common tussock grass of moister sites in Victoria and is also found in all the eastern States.

Tussock Grass likes moist soil and will grow in full sun or part shade. It is often used in landscaping due to its graceful arching form. The dense tussocks provide nesting materials and habitat for small animals, reptiles and frogs, and food for birds and caterpillars. Aborigines used the stems and leaves for string and basket making. Propagation is from seed.

Poas belong in the *Poaceae* or Grass Family. *Poa* is the Greek word for grass. The genus name is after Jacques Labillardiere, the French naturalist noted for his descriptions of Australian flora. Photo: Lorraine Norden. For more information visit www.friendsofvenusbaypeninsula.org.au