



## Friends of Venus Bay Peninsula Inc

ABN 17 536 241 485

PO Box 244 Venus Bay Vic 3956

Website: [www.friendsofvenusbaypeninsula.org.au](http://www.friendsofvenusbaypeninsula.org.au)

Email: [friendsofvbp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofvbp@gmail.com)

### Plant of the month: Coast Spear-grass *Austrostipa stipoides*



Coast Spear-grass *Austrostipa stipoides* is another of our attractive native grasses. It is a densely tufted tussock with narrow, prickly, inrolled leaves and flowering stems or culms to 80 cm high. The flowers form a narrow panicle from October to March and the hairy seeds have a long awn up to 4 cm long. The common name of Spear-grass for this genus is from the sharp, pointed seeds that can penetrate the skin, mouths and eyes of stock. It is found along the coast, often on exposed sea-cliffs from WA to NSW and at Venus Bay it occurs along Anderson Inlet, in association with the saltmarsh community.

Coast Spear-grass grows in well-drained sandy soil in full sun. It is tolerant of salt spray and is useful as a soil binder. It can be used in landscaping to add structure in a native garden. The dense tussocks provide nesting materials and habitat for small animals, reptiles and frogs, and food for birds and caterpillars. Propagation is from seed.

*Austrostipas* belong in the *Poaceae* or Grass Family. The genus name *Austrostipa* comes from Latin *austro* or southern and *stipe* the Greek word for tow, alluding to the fibre of flax, hemp or jute prepared for spinning. The species name

*stipoides* means resembling the genus *Stipa*, from when it was placed in a different genus. Photo: Lorraine Norden. For more information visit [www.friendsofvenusbaypeninsula.org.au](http://www.friendsofvenusbaypeninsula.org.au)

