

Koeleria macrantha

[Synonyms : *Acheata geniculata*, *Aira cristata*, *Aira gracilis*, *Aira macrantha*, *Airochloa cristata*, *Airochloa gracilis*, *Brachystylus cristatus*, *Dactylis cristata*, *Festuca cristata*, *Koeleria albescens*, *Koeleria alpigena*, *Koeleria arkansana*, *Koeleria cristata*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *elegantula*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *geniculata*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *gracilis*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *longifolia*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *macrantha*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *major*, *Koeleria cristata* subsp. *mongolica*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *nuttalii*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *oregona*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *pinetorum*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *pseudocristata*, *Koeleria cristata* var. *pubescens*, *Koeleria elegantula*, *Koeleria gracilis*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *breviculmis*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *californica*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *californiensis*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *caudata*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *dasyclada*, *Koeleria gracilis* subsp. *idahoensis*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *latifrons*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *laxa*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *longifolia*, *Koeleria gracilis* subsp. *macrura*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *missouriana*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *mukdenensis*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *munita*, *Koeleria gracilis* subsp. *nitida*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *oregana*, *Koeleria gracilis* subsp. *polyantha*, *Koeleria gracilis* subsp. *pseudocristata*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *pseudocristatoides*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *pseudonitida*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *sublanuginosa*, *Koeleria gracilis* var. *subrepens*, *Koeleria idahoensis*, *Koeleria idahoensis* var. *idahoensis*, *Koeleria idahoensis* var. *pseudocristatoides*, *Koeleria latifrons*, *Koeleria longifolia*, *Koeleria macrura*, *Koeleria majoriflora*, *Koeleria mukdenensis*, *Koeleria nitida*, *Koeleria nitida* var. *arkansana*, *Koeleria nitida* var. *breviculmis*, *Koeleria nitida* var. *californica*, *Koeleria nitida* var. *caudata*, *Koeleria nitida* var. *latifrons*, *Koeleria nitida* var. *laxa*, *Koeleria nitida* var. *missouriana*, *Koeleria nitida* var. *sublanuginosa*, *Koeleria nitida* var. *subrepens*, *Koeleria oregana*, *Koeleria poaeformis*, *Koeleria poiformis*, *Koeleria polyantha* var. *californica*, *Koeleria pseudocristata*, *Koeleria pseudocristata* var. *californica*, *Koeleria pseudocristata* var. *longifolia*, *Koeleria pseudocristata* var. *oregona*, *Koeleria pseudocristata* var. *pseudocristata*, *Koeleria pseudocristata* var. *pseudonitida*, *Koeleria pyramidata*, *Koeleria robinsoniana*, *Koeleria robinsoniana* var. *australis*, *Koeleria robinsoniana* var. *robinsoniana*, *Koeleria tokiensis* subsp. *mongolica*, *Koeleria yukonensis*, *Poa cristata*]

CRESTED HAIRGRASS is a perennial grass. Native to northern Asia, to Europe (including Britain) and to North America, it has shiny grey- or purple-tinged green flower spikelets. It is also known as Crested koeleria, *Cribwellt* (Welsh), *Fin tofsäxing* (Swedish), Junegrass, Koelers grass, Mountain junegrass, *Ometlina štíhla* (Slovak), Prairie junegrass, Prairie koeler's grass, and *Smělek štíhlý* (Czech).

Flowers are pollinated by the wind.

Macrantha is derived from Greek *macro-* (large, long) and *-antha* (flowered) components meaning 'with large flowers'.

For the Isleta Indians (and no doubt other North American Indian tribes as well) the tiny seeds offered a staple food before the advent of wheat (*Triticum*). They used them to make bread and a porridge-like dish. The Havasupai tribe not only made them into bread but also stored them in caves for Winter food.

The grass provided fodder for Okanagan-Colville horses and cattle, and the Havasupai Indians grazed their livestock on it.

Some of the Navajo Indians used a bound bunch of crested hair-grass (about a foot long) as a cleaning brush, while this grass provided a paintbrush for the Cheyenne when participants were preparing themselves for ceremonial rituals.

The plant also played a role when the Cheyenne Indians performed their Sun Dance.

As a medicine the North American Cheyenne applied the grass to cuts.

As long in the past under Indian regimes the grass provides grazing today (viewed in western North America apparently as one of the better grasses available there) for both livestock and wild animals.