

# Carex kermadecensis

## COMMON NAME

Kermadec sedge

## SYNONYMS

*Carex forsteri* Wahl. subsp. *insularis* W.R.B.Oliver

## FAMILY

Cyperaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Carex kermadecensis* Petrie

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

## NVS CODE

CARKER

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = c.60$

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: CD, IE

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: CD, IE

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE

2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Kermadec Islands group where it is known only from Raoul and Macauley Islands.

## HABITAT

Coastal forest where it is usually found amongst boulders, rubble and near sea bird nesting sites. Sometimes found in open exposed places but generally prefers shaded situations.



Raoul Island. Photographer: Bec Stanley,  
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In cultivation ex Raoul Island. Photographer:  
Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/10/2007,  
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## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rather robust tufted, light yellow-green to green tussock forming sedge usually of shaded forested slopes. **Culms** up to 450 mm tall, 2 mm diameter, triquetrous, finely and faintly scabrid just below inflorescence; basal sheaths light brown. **Leaves** much > culms, 7–10 mm wide, double-folded, margins scabrid. **Inflorescence** of 5–10 usually compound spikes. **Spikes** 20–55 × 5–7 mm, approximate or with the lower 2–4 more distant, erect on stiff peduncles; the terminal spike wholly or mostly male, or completely female; remaining spikes female with occasional male flowers at the base; lower subtending bracts leaf-like, much > inflorescence. **Glumes** (excluding awn) < utricles, ovate-oblong, emarginated or acute, margins fimbriate towards apex, light brown or with minute dark brown flecks, chartaceous to membranous, awns up to 3 mm long, pale green to straw-coloured, scabrid. **Utricles** 3–4 × 1.5 mm, trigonous, ellipsoid or more or less ovoid, nerves distinct, membranous, grey-brown with red-brown flecks, beak 1–2 mm long, deeply and acutely bifid, orifice and margins of beak and of upper part of utricles usually scabrid. **Stigmas** 3. **Nut** 2 mm long, dark brown, trigonous, oblong-obovoid.

## SIMILAR TAXA

As the only carex on the Kermadecs field identification is not usually a problem. However, herbarium material could be confused with *C. elingamita* Hamlin of the Three Kings Islands group. From that species *C. kermadecensis* differs consistently by the lowermost spikes predominantly female rather than largely male toward the top, by the utricles 3–4 mm rather than 4–4.5 mm long and by the nut coloured dark brown rather than red brown. That they are closely allied is inferred from nrDNA ITS sequences which position both species as sister taxa.

## FLOWERING

October–January

## FRUITING

October–May

## LIFE CYCLE

Nuts surrounded by inflated utricles are dispersed by granivory and wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in a warm sheltered site, prefers semi-shade. Very cold sensitive.

## THREATS

A naturally uncommon, range restricted species. However, it has not been seen on Macauley Island since 1989.

## ETYMOLOGY

**carex**: Latin name for a species of sedge, now applied to the whole group.

**kermadecensis**: From the Kermadec Islands

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Moore LB, Edgar E. 1970. Flora of New Zealand, Volume II. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Monocotyledones except Gramineae. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 354 p.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/carex-kermadecensis/>