

Carex subdola

COMMON NAME

sedge

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex subdola Boott

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

CARSUB

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North and South Islands from Awanui south to Nelson and Marlborough.

HABITAT

Coastal to lowland in freshwater wetlands, under willow in gully systems, along river and stream banks, lake margins, and in damp seepages, pond margins and clearings within forest. Preferring fertile to mid-fertile wetlands.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).



Carex subdola. Photographer: Bec Stanley, Licence: CC BY-SA.



In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 22/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizomatous, bright green to somewhat glaucescent sedge forming rather rigid erect tufts. **Rhizome** 2–4 mm diameter, hard, woody. **Culms** 80–600 × 1.0–2.5 mm, trigonous, lightly scabrid below inflorescence; basal sheaths light brown, grey-brown or reddish brown. **Leaves** numerous, > culms, 2–4 mm wide, double-folded, ± erect, keel and margins of lamina sharply scabrid. **Spikes** 4–8, pedunculate, all ± approximate or the lowest more distant, terminal (1)–2–(3) spikes male, the remainder female, often male at the tip, 30–75 × 4–7 mm, lower spikes often with 1–2 secondary spikes at the base. **Glumes** < or ± = utricles, ovate-oblong, emarginate with a strongly scabrid awn to 6 mm long, dark red-brown, coriaceous; midrib broad, 3-nerved, green to later light brown. **Utricles** 3.0–4.5 × 2.0–2.5 mm, biconvex, rather compressed, ovoid, usually cinnamon-brown, with many distinct nerves on each face, smooth, tapering gradually towards the short beak, < 0.5 mm long, orifice entire, slightly bidentate, occasionally faintly scabrid; stipe slightly < 0.5 mm long. **Stigmas** 2. **Nut** 1.5–2 mm long, plano-convex, oblong or ovoid, brown

SIMILAR TAXA

Carex subdola can be confused with *C. sinclairii*. From that species it is best distinguished by the colour of the mature utricles; those of *C. subdola* are bright cinnamon-brown, and those of *C. sinclairii* are yellow-brown to dark brown. Smaller specimens of *C. sinclairii* have glumes without awns, or scarcely awned, and obovoid utricles with only 2–5 prominent nerves, but larger plants have longer awns in some of the glumes and the utricles are ovoid and tapering with nerves as is more usual in *C. subdola*.

FLOWERING

September–November

FRUITING

October–April

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by the division of established plants. Although a wetland species *C. subdola* will grow in most soils and moisture regimes. However, this species does best when grown in permanently damp conditions.

ETYMOLOGY

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

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (10 August 2006). 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.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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