

Cyperus brevifolius

SYNONYMS

Kyllinga brevifolia Rottb.

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Cyperus brevifolius (Rottb.) Endl. ex Hassk.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

CYPBRE

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Grassy turfs up to 30 cm tall, usually much less, with characteristic single green to yellow oval flowerhead usually with three (rarely two or four) long grass-like leaves immediately under this, at the end of flower stalk.

DISTRIBUTION

Scattered in northern North Island south to Taranaki, also in Westland.

HABITAT

Wet pasture and heavily trampled/mown areas such as pathways, wet lawns.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The plant has long rhizomes with reddish-purple scales. **Flower stems** are 1 to 30 cm high, slender, with one to four basal leaves. **Leaves** are shorter than the flower stems, flat and 1 to 2.5 mm wide. **Spikelets** many, tightly clustered, each 3 mm long and with one fertile and one sterile glume. **Glumes** are membranous with the green keel forming a sharp tip; the lower glume has 3 nerves on each side, and the upper has two such nerves. There is a single stamen with two style branches.

SIMILAR TAXA

No other sedge has the single oval flowerhead subtended by usually 3 long leafy bracts, with the exception of *Rhynchospora colorata*, restricted to the Kermadecs, which has a white oval head.

FLOWERING

Summer to autumn

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

FRUITING

Summer to autumn



Kyllinga brevifolius. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Kyllinga brevifolius. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by contaminated machinery.

YEAR NATURALISED

1876

ORIGIN

Pan tropical and sub-tropical

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Controlled by mowing.

ETYMOLOGY

cyperus: From the ancient Greek name for sedge, kypeiros

brevifolius: Short-leaved

ATTRIBUTION

Prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Description from Healy & Edgar (1980).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Champion P. et al. 2020. Freshwater Invasive Species of New Zealand 2020. NIWA publication.

<https://docs.niwa.co.nz/library/public/FreInSpec.pdf>

Healy AJ, Edgar E. 1980. Flora of New Zealand, Volume III. Adventive Cyperaceous, Petalous and Spathaceous Monocotyledons. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 220 p.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA. 1989. Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington, NZ. 319 p.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cyperus-brevifolius/>