

Isolepis caligenis

SYNONYMS

Scirpus caligenis var. *tristigmata* V.J.Cook, *Scirpus caligenis* V.J.Cook

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Isolepis caligenis (V.J.Cook) Soják

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

ISOCAL

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DP

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island, South Islands, from the Kaimanawa Range south to at least Otago.

HABITAT

Mostly montane (700–1400 m a.s.l.). In damp ground within forest, and on the margins of streams and lakes. Usually in shaded sites.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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



Herbarium specimen: AK 289205.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Bright green, rhizomatous, leafy, tufted plants. **Tufts** usually distant. **Rhizome** c. 0.5 mm diameter. **Culms** 10–100 × c. 0.5 mm, stiff. **Leaves** 2–5, usually 1 at least > culm, c. 0.5 mm wide, often curved, concave-convex, plano-convex; lowermost leaves reduced to brown fibrillose sheaths. **Inflorescence** of 1–(2) spikelets; subtending bract much > spikelet; up to 30 mm, long. **Spikelets** 2–5 × 1–4 mm, ovate-elliptical to suborbicular, pale green to pale brown. **Glumes** numerous, 1.5–2.5 mm long, white and membranous, acute, occasionally with a red-brown patch on either side, or with minute dots towards apex, keel green, usually excurrent; 2 lowermost glumes frequently larger than rest, to 3.5 mm long, the lower with much extended keel. **Hypogynous bristles** 0. **Stamens** 1–3. **Style-branches** 2–3. **Nut** c. 1 mm long, slightly < 1 mm wide, suborbicular, unequally biconvex, compressed with edges flattened, apiculate, surface pearly grey, finely reticulate, appearing smooth.

SIMILAR TAXA

Easily recognised by bright green, stiffly erect, leafy tufts; culms mostly > 20 mm tall; by the conspicuous, large, whitish spikelets (usually > 3 mm wide); and pearl-grey, compressed nut. Most similar to *Isolepis basilaris* Hook.f. which differs by the usually shorter culms; spikelets < 2 mm wide; and by the dorsally rounded, dark brown to almost black nut.

FLOWERING

October–December

FRUITING

December–May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed, and from rooted pieces. Prefers a cool, shady, permanently damp site. Best grown in a pot. Dislikes humid climates.

ETYMOLOGY

isolepis: From the Greek isos (equal) and lepis (scale)

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Johnson AT, Smith HA. 1986. Plant Names Simplified: Their pronunciation, derivation and meaning. Landsman Bookshop Ltd, Buckenhill, UK.

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/isolepis-caligenis/>