

Carex allanii

COMMON NAME

Allan's sedge

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex allanii Hamlin

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

CARALL

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Data Deficient

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to the South Island. Known only from the Old Man Range and several sites on the flanks of the Central Otago block mountains. Specimens are needed to substantiate a 2004 report from the Arthur Range, NW Nelson. Pictures of these plants (above) appear to be similar to *Carex enysii*.

HABITAT

A shade-requiring sedge usually found at the base of rocky bluffs.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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



Mount Arthur (from a specimen collected by Graeme Jane). Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 23/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Mount Arthur (from a specimen collected by Graeme Jane). Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 23/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizomatous sedge, forming diffuse matted patches. **Rhizomes** up to 0.5 mm diameter. **Leaf-sheaths** red-brown, grooved. **Leaves** 2–4 = or slightly < culms, 0.2 mm wide, concavo-convex to plano(flat)-convex above, margins slightly scabrid (with teeth) towards tip. **Inflorescence** a solitary spike of tightly clustered flowers; female flowers 1–2, male flowers in a spikelet 3–4 mm long. **Glumes**: Lowermost female glume bract-like; upper female glume 3–4 mm long, acute, red-brown, midrib green, extending to a fine scabrid spine 0.5 mm long. **Utricles** 3–3.5 × 1 mm, somewhat 3-angled (trigonous), ovoid, with 2 lateral nerves, beak 1 mm long with scabrid margins and oblique orifice (beak fragile and easily lost from specimens). **Stigmas** 3. **Nut** < 2 mm long, obovoid, 3-angled.

SIMILAR TAXA

Carex allanii is similar to *C. acicularis* and *C. enysii* and differs from both species by its rhizomatous habit, very slender leaves and few (1–3) widely-spaced flowers. At first glance this species has the appearance of the exotic grass *Festuca rubra* subsp. *rubra*, it is only on closer inspection that the inconspicuous flowers are seen near the leaf tip.

FLOWERING

?–November–December–?

FRUITING

?–November–December–?

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown by division. Fresh seed should germinate readily.

THREATS

Carex allanii, described in 1962, is known with certainty only from a handful of herbarium specimens. It may be genuinely uncommon, though it was collected once by accident in the mid 1990s (P.B. Heenan pers. comm.) suggesting it might also simply be overlooked. Until further field work is undertaken and backed up by good herbarium specimens, the exact status, and degree of threat (if any) this species faces will remain unresolved. This is why it has been assessed as Data Deficient. At sites where it is currently known it appears intolerant of competition from grasses such as *Festuca rubra*.

ETYMOLOGY

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

allanii: After Dr Harry Howard Barton Allan C.B.E. (1882–1957) one time school teacher, then first director of DSIR Botany Division, and 'sole' author of Flora I, the first in the former DSIR Botany Division flora series.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

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

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Carex allanii* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/carex-allanii/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

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