

# Carex dolomitica

## COMMON NAME

Mt Burnett Sedge

## SYNONYMS

None

## FAMILY

Cyperaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Carex dolomitica* Heenan et de Lange

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

## NVS CODE

CARDOL

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = c.72

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Critical

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, where it is known only from Mt Burnett. There it grows on both North and South Peaks.

## HABITAT

Confined to open or exposed areas of dolomite and dolomite/ limestone/marble karrenfield with little associated vegetation. Plants have also colonised the mining roads and old quarry.

## FEATURES

Robust, tussock-forming, bronze-green sedge with channelled leaves. Leaves 200-600 x 4-8.5 mm, rigid, erect, channelled, green. Culms 400-850 mm long, stout, ascending or spreading, rigid, trigonous, longer than leaves when mature. Basal sheaths up to 60 mm long, dark brown or black, nerves distinct. Spikes 4-8, up to 40 mm long, erect, upper spikes approximate and sessile, lower 1(-2) spikes distant, shortly pedunculate; spikes subtended by narrow, leaf-like bracts; terminal 1(-2) spikes male; female spikes cylindrical, with three stigmas. Glumes 3.3-3.8 x 1.5-2.3 mm, similar length, or shorter than utricles, ovate, elliptic, chestnut brown at base, pale brown above, persistent, 2-lobed at apex, midrib green, awn 0.2-1 mm, weakly scabrid, green. Utricles 3.2-4.2 x 1.3-1.9 mm, glabrous, broad-ovoid to ovoid, elliptic or narrowly-elliptic, plano-convex or subtrigonus, black with a pale brown stipe and beak. Beak 0.3-0.5 mm.



Mt Burnett, January. Photographer: G.M. Crowcroft



Mt Burnett, South Peak. Photographer: G.M. Crowcroft

## SIMILAR TAXA

Perhaps closest to *C. dallii* Kirk, from which differs in its wine red, finer (1-2 mm wide) leaves, and narrower female spikes. However, several as yet unnamed carices are closely allied to *C. dolomitica*, and further work is needed to resolve the relationships between these plants.

## FLOWERING

November

## FRUITING

November-September

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy to grow from divisions of whole plants and from fresh seed. An attractive, robust sedge that does well in full sun. It likes a fertile soil and can tolerate free-draining conditions and/or some waterlogging. An excellent rockery plant.

## THREATS

*Carex dolomitica* is at serious risk from dolomite mining which is destroying its only known habitat faster than it can recolonise old mine workings. This sedge is also threatened from competition from weeds such as Mexican daisy (*Erigeron karvinskianus*) which have recently colonised Mt Burnett. *Carex dolomitica* is the only dolomite endemic to have successfully colonised the mine roads.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available. Some plants are held privately and by at least one Botanic Garden.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 October 2003. Description adapted from Heenan & de Lange (1997).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan, P.B.; de Lange, P. J. 1997: *Carex dolomitica* (Cyperaceae), a new and rare species from New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 35: 423-428.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

## CITATION

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

## MORE INFORMATION

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