

Carex gaudichaudiana

COMMON NAME

Gaudichaud's sedge

SYNONYMS

Carex vulgaris var. *gaudichaudiana* (Kunth) Boott

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex gaudichaudiana Kunth

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

CARGAU

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 72

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North and South Islands from about the northern Waikato south. Also in Australia and New Guinea.

HABITAT

Lowland to alpine in wetlands, bogs and mires, along river flats, in seepages, around the margins of lakes, ponds and tarns.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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



Mavora lakes, November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Lake Wanaka. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizome ascending; tufts flaccid. **Rhizomes** 1.5–2.0 mm diameter, often long-creeping. **Culms** variable in size, 20–320 × 0.3–1.0 mm, trigonous, almost glabrous, but often slightly scabrid just below the inflorescence; basal sheaths light brown or grey-brown. **Leaves** numerous, < or us. > culms, 0.5–2.5 mm wide, double-folded, grass-like, keel, margins and nerves on adaxial surface slightly scabrid towards tip. **Inflorescence** of 3–5 spikes, ± approximate, usually sessile; uppermost spike male, occasionally compound with a smaller male spike near its base; lower spikes female, often male at the top, 5–20 × 2–5 mm, usually < male spikes. **Glumes** < utricles, ovate, subacute, dark brown to almost black, coriaceous, midrib narrow to broad, green, scarcely reaching tip of glume. **Utricles** 2.5–4.0 × 1.5–2.0 mm, narrow-ovoid to orbicular-ovoid, gradually tapering above, much compressed, green with minute red-brown spots when mature, conspicuously nerved, margins smooth; beak almost wanting, orifice entire or minutely bidentate; stipe < 0.5 mm. long. **Stigmas** 2. **Nut** 1.5–2 mm. long, biconvex, orbicular-ovoid, dull grey.

SIMILAR TAXA

Carex gaudichaudiana is most similar to *C. sinclairii* Boott and *C. subdola* Boott from which it is easily distinguished by its overall smaller size, narrower leaves and sessile spikes.

FLOWERING

October–December

FRUITING

December–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. gaudichaudiana* will grow well in most soils and moisture regimes. Does best in full sun.

ETYMOLOGY

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

gaudichaudiana: After Gaudichaud-Baupre

ATTRIBUTION

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.

MORE INFORMATION

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