

Carex lectissima

COMMON NAMES

fine-leaved bastard grass, hook sedge

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Slender, tufted, bright green plants. **Culms** 30–300 mm long, < 0.5 mm wide, glabrous; basal bracts red-brown with paler striations. **Leaves** 4–7 per culm, < mature culms, us. < 0.5 mm wide, deeply channelled or flat with a distinct groove, bright green, glabrous at the base, scabrid towards the long-tapering, finely acute apex. **Spike** 5–30 × 2–3 mm, female flowers c. 10 mostly distant, internodes 2–3 mm long (up to 4 mm long at base of spike). **Glumes** = or < utricles, deciduous, lanceolate, acute, membranous with green midrib. **Utricles** 3.5–5.0 × c. 1 mm, trigonous, light greenish brown, lateral nerves prominent, somewhat spreading when ripe, stipe and beak c. 1 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Carex lectissima is distinguished from all other New Zealand *Carex* species with hooked utricles by the light-coloured striations on the red-brown basal sheaths, and from *C. obtusifolia* (Heenan) K.A.Ford by the trigonous upper part of the leaf and by the acute rather than obtuse leaf apex. It could be confused with *Carex minor* (Kük.) K.A.Ford from which it differs by its much narrower, filiform leaves.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North, South and Stewart Islands from Te Moehau south.

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine (coastal in Fiordland). Usually in cloud forest where it grows on moss and liverwort covered ground, on peat and especially around soak holes, semi-permanent pools and on rotting logs.

GENUS

Carex

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex lectissima K.A.Ford

SYNONYMS

Uncinia filiformis Boott; *Uncinia rupestris* Raoul var. *rupestris* Kük.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes



Tararua Range. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 23/02/2008, Licence: CC BY.



Tararua Range. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 23/02/2008, Licence: CC BY.

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October–November

FRUITING

November–March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by division of established plants, though these may take a while to settle. Prefers moist soil in a semi-shaded site. This sedge must never be allowed to dry out.

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

ETYMOLOGY

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

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to indigenous and naturalised Carex in New Zealand](#)

NVS CODE

CARLEC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 88

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened [Help](#)

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

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.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970). Fact sheet prepared by Peter J. de Lange 17 August 2006. Some of this factsheet information is derived from [Flora of New Zealand Online](#) and is used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand](#) licence.

MORE INFORMATION

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

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