Carex maorica

**COMMON NAME**
Maori Sedge

**SYNONYMS**
Carex fascicularis Boott var. minor Boott; Carex forsteri Wahl. var. minor (Boott) Hook.f.

**FAMILY**
Cyperaceae

**AUTHORITY**
Carex maorica Hamlin

**FLORA CATEGORY**
Vascular – Native

**ENDEMIC TAXON**
Yes

**ENDEMIC GENUS**
No

**ENDEMIC FAMILY**
No

**STRUCTURAL CLASS**
Sedges

**NVS CODE**
CARMAO

**CHROMOSOME NUMBER**
2n = c.72-76

**CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS**
2012 | Not Threatened

**PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES**
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened

**DISTRIBUTION**
Endemic. New Zealand: North and South Islands. In the North Island uncommon in the east from East Cape to the Wairarapa otherwise widespread. In the South Island apparently absent from Southland and Fiordland

**HABITAT**
Coastal to lowland in freshwater wetlands, under willow in gully systems, along river and stream banks, lake margins, and in damp seepages, pond margins and clearings within forest. Preferring fertile to mid-fertile wetlands.
FEATURES
Light green to yellow-green tufted sedge. Culms 150.0-700.0 × 1.0–2.5 mm., trigonous, smooth or faintly scabrid below inflorescence; basal sheaths light to dark grey, often red-tinged. Leaves > culms, to 1 m long, 2–7 mm wide, double-folded, cross-veinlets ± prominent, keel and margins minutely scabrid. Inflorescence of 2-5 close-set, sessile, usually erect, occasionally spreading spikes, or the lowest 1–2 rather distant and shortly pedunculate; terminal spike male; remaining spikes female, usually > and overtopping male spike, 20–60 × 7–12 mm, crowded at same level round base of male spike. Glumes usually much < utricles, 1-2 mm long, narrowly ovate-lanceolate, margin of upper part fimbriate or lacerate, hyaline with a green midrib produced to a scabrid awn 1-3 mm long, up to 6 mm long in lowermost glumes. Utricles 4.0-5.5(-6.0) × 1.0–1.5 mm., plano-convex or biconvex, turgid, ovate or lanceolate, spreading when ripe, shining light green to light brown with numerous distinct white nerves, very slightly tapered above to a beak 1.5–2.0 mm long, with bifid, glabrous orifice, crura c. 1/3 length of entire beak; stipe narrow, c.0.5 mm long. Stigmas 3. Nut c. 1.5 mm. long, triquetrous, ellipsoid, cream or light brown

SIMILAR TAXA
Carex maorica is easily recognised by its slender culms; pale green to yellow green wide leaves; prominent cross-veinlets on sheaths and leaves; and mostly clustered spikelets, and short glumes with lacerate or fimbriate margins; and by the submembranous, strongly nerved, glabrous, spreading utricles. There are only two other carices in New Zealand with cross-veinlets, the indigenous C. fascicularis Boott and naturalised C. lurida Wahlenberg. Carex fascicularis differs from C. maorica by the female spikes mostly distant to ± approximate (but then never clustered at one level round base of male spike). Carex lurida is a much larger sedge than either species (up to 2.5 m tall) and has utricles 6–9 × 2–4 rather than 4.0-6.0 × 1.0-1.5 mm

FLOWERING
October - December

FRUITING
November - May

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. maorica 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.

ATTRIBUTION

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

MORE INFORMATION