

Carex parvispica

COMMON NAMES

Sinclair's hook sedge, Sinclair's bastard grass

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp, DPR, DPS, DPT

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Blue-grey to dark green shortly rhizomatous, spreading, turf-forming sedge. **Rhizomes** 1–2 mm diameter. **Culms** 70–300 × 0.5–1 mm, erect, usually glabrous, though occasionally faintly scabrid just below inflorescence; basal bracts dull grey-brown. **Leaves** 6–9 per culm, blue-grey to dark green, < or rarely almost equal to culm in length, 1.5–4 mm wide, very stiff. **Spikes** 10–20 × 4–7 mm, oblong to obovate, ebracteate, male flowers obscured by 10–15 larger surrounding female flowers, close-set, internodes about equal. **Glumes** same length as utricles, persistent, ovate, obtuse or subacute, coriaceous, straw-coloured, rarely light greyish brown with a broad, pale green midrib, the central nerves thickened and conspicuous. **Utricles** 4.5–6 × 1.5–2 mm, plano-convex, elliptical, coriaceous, grey-brown, nerved below and with a prominent lateral nerve, hispid on margins and both surfaces of upper half, beak and stipe scarcely narrowed, 0.5 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Very close to *Carex subtilis* K.A.Ford from which it differs by its much broader, rather stiff, blue-grey to dark green leaves, broader spikes and utricles. The utricles are more prominently nerved than those of *C. subtilis*, while the glumes are invariably straw-coloured rather than dark brown or brown-tinged.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island in the east from near Tarndale, Marlborough south.

HABITAT

Low montane to subalpine in wet or boggy ground within tussock grassland. In Otago it is often found at the base of tors, stream banks, or in seepages.

THREATS

Believed to be a naturally uncommon, ecologically sparse species. However it is poorly known from large parts of its reported range. Further survey to ascertain its exact status is much desired.

GENUS

Carex

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex parvispica K.A.Ford



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SYNONYMS

Uncinia sinclairii Boott in Hook.f.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October–December

FRUITING

October–June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Has been cultivated. It is easily grown but rather slow to establish. Fresh seed germinates easily and plants can be grown by division. Its exact requirements are not clear, though it dislikes humidity and will not flower in northern New Zealand without cold treatment.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).

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

CARPAR

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 94, 96

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

2012 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: Sp

2004 | Sparse

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Declining | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, NR, NS, NStr, RR 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

Fact sheet prepared by Peter J. de Lange (17 August 2006). Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970). 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.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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