

Carex resectans

COMMON NAME

desert sedge

SYNONYMS

Carex inversa R.Br. var. *radiata* Cheeseman

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex resectans Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

CARRES

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 58-60

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North and South Islands. Mainly easterly and uncommon in the North Island where it found from about the Hawke's Bay south.

HABITAT

Coastal to alpine. Usually on consolidated sand and alluvium in free draining usually very dry (though often seasonally flooded) habitats in short-tussock grassland, rough pasture, or in river beds or lake margins.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

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



In cultivation ex Turakirae Head. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



In cultivation ex Turakirae Head. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizomatous; yellow-green to dark green sedge, usually forming a dense sward, or small circular patches. **Rhizome** 1.0–1.5 mm diameter, woody, much-branched, long-creeping, with shoots spaced singly and evenly along it, c. 1 mm diameter at base. **Culms** 5–40 mm tall, completely hidden by the leaf-sheaths; basal sheaths light grey-brown or chestnut. **Leaves** much > culms, 20–100 × c. 0.5 mm, plano-convex towards the tip, involute towards the base, wiry, margins scabrid especially towards the long trigonous tip. **Inflorescence** a pale green, compact head, 4–8 mm long, orbicular-ovate, with 1–3 crowded spikes, subtended by 2–3 leaf-like bracts. **Spikes** androgynous, few-flowered, male flowers 1–3 at base of spike, occasionally 0, female flowers 3–8. **Glumes** < or rarely = utricles, ovate or ovate-lanceolate, acuminate, hyaline, keel stout, green, 1-3-nerved. **Utricles** 3–4 × 1.5–2.0 mm, plano-convex, prominently nerved, light brown; contracted above to a narrow green beak c. 1.5 mm long, margins minutely toothed, orifice bifid; stipe not markedly contracted, c. 0.1 mm long. **Stigmas** 2. **Nut** c. 1.5 mm long, plano-convex, obovoid to almost orbicular, brown, shining, shortly stipitate.

SIMILAR TAXA

Carex resectans is most similar to *C. colensoi* Boott and *C. inversa* R.Br. two other densely tufted, grass-like species from which it is easily distinguished by the long-creeping rhizome with the shoots spread evenly along it, culms sheathed by leaves for almost their entire length, few-flowered, minute inflorescences which are usually obscured within the surrounding foliage, and light brown nuts with a pale green, minutely toothed beak.

FLOWERING

October–December

FRUITING

November–April

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from the division of whole plants and from fresh seed. Best suited for a well drained, sunny site in dry climates. This species dislikes humidity and soon dies if kept to moist.

ETYMOLOGY

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

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (10 August 2006). 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.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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