

Carex silvestris

COMMON NAMES

forest bastard grass, hook sedge

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Carex silvestris (Hamlin) K.A.Ford

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Bright green, densely caespitose plants. **Culms** 200–400 × c. 0.5 mm, glabrous; basal bracts light cinnamon-brown or yellow-brown, not shining. **Leaves** 4–5 per culm, ± = or slightly > culms, 0.5–2.0 mm wide, bright green, tapering to a long filiform tip, scabrid on margins and on upper surface towards leaf-tip. **Spikes** 35–100 × 2–3 mm, often bracteate with the leaf-like bract much > spike, female flowers c. 10–20, internodes 3–5 mm long towards base of spike, 1–2 mm long above. **Glumes** much < utricles, persistent, ovate, acute or subacute, membranous, very faintly nerved, midrib pale green. **Utricles** 3.5–5.0 mm long, slightly < 1 mm diameter, plano-convex, concavo-convex or subtrigonal, oblong or ovoid-lanceolate, light green, rarely greenish brown, membranous, few-nerved or smooth, stipe c. 1 mm long, narrowed above to a distinct beak 1.0–1.5 mm long

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from all other species with persistent glumes by the glabrous culms and glumes which are conspicuously shorter than the utricles(see also *Carex egmontiana* (Hamlin) K.A.Ford).

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Pureora and the Kaimai Range south), South Island and Stewart Island/Rakiura.

HABITAT

Lowland to upper montane forest. Often rather local and probably Naturally Uncommon/Sparse.

GENUS

Carex

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

(Hamlin) K.A.Ford

SYNONYMS

Uncinia silvestris Hamlin



Tararua Range. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 17/01/2008, Licence: CC BY.



Tararua Range. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 17/01/2008, Licence: CC BY.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October–November

FRUITING

November–February

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by division of established plants. Prefers a permanently moist, peaty soil but will grow in most substrates. Best in semi-shade.

ETYMOLOGY

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

silvestris: Of forests

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

NVS CODE

CARSIL

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 Data Deficient 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).

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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