

Carex sinclairii

COMMON NAME

Sinclair's sedge

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex sinclairii Boott

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

CARSIN

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand. North and South Islands from the Waikato River delta and Hauraki Plains south.

HABITAT

Coastal to alpine. In freshwater wetlands, under willow in gully systems, along river and stream banks, lake margins, and in damp seepages, pond and tarn margins and clearings within forest. Preferring fertile to mid-fertile wetlands.



L. Tennyson, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Inflorescence, Whanganui. Photographer: Colin Ogle

FEATURES

Rhizomatous; tufts ± distant, rather stiff, bright green to bright yellow-green (often with a slight glaucous sheen) . Rhizome 2–4 mm diameter, occasionally long-creeping. Culms 40–500 × 0.5–1.5 mm, trigonous, margins faintly scabrid, especially towards inflorescence; basal sheaths grey-brown or reddish brown. Leaves numerous = or > culms, 2–4 mm wide, double-folded, ± erect, rather rigid, margins closely scabrid. Spikes 4–7, all, or at least the lowest, distinctly pedunculate; terminal 1(–2) spikes male, dark brown or occasionally very light brown, the rest female, 15–35 × 3–5 mm, usually dark brown, occasionally branched at base. Glumes ± = utricles, ovate-lanceolate, subacute, truncate, almost emarginate, coriaceous, dark red-brown, almost black, midrib narrow, light yellow-green, extending to the tip or produced beyond to a scarcely scabrid awn usually < 1 mm, but up to 2.5 mm long. Utricle 2.5–3.5 × c.1.5 mm, plano-convex, ovoid to ovoid-ellipsoid, rather compressed, light yellow-brown to dark brown, with usually 2–5 distinct nerves on each face, occasionally more in larger plants, margins glabrous; tapering gradually above to a beak slightly < 0.5 mm long, orifice entire or minutely bidentate; stipe < 0.5 mm long. Stigmas 2. Nut 1.5–2.0 mm. long, plano-convex, oblong, light brown

SIMILAR TAXA

Carex sinclairii can be confused with *C. subdola*. From that species it is best distinguished by the colour of the mature utricles; those of *C. subdola* are bright cinnamon-brown, and those of *C. sinclairii* are yellow-brown to dark brown. Smaller specimens of *C. sinclairii* have glumes without awns, or scarcely awned, and obovoid utricles with only 2–5 prominent nerves, but larger plants have longer awns in some of the glumes and the utricles are ovoid and tapering with nerves as is usual in *C. subdola*.

Can also be confused with *Carex gaudichaudiana* (with which it often co-occurs) when utricles are immature and green. *Carex gaudichaudiana* is perennial, smaller, and with finer leaves (

FLOWERING

October - November

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. sinclairii* will grow well in most soils and moisture regimes. Best in partial shade unless grown in permanently damp conditions.

ETYMOLOGY

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

sinclairii: After Sinclair (c. 1796–1861). Colonial Secretary and naturalist.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (110 August 2006). Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora.

Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285–309

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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