

# 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

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

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.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).



L. Tennyson, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Inflorescence, Whanganui. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Date taken: 01/02/2013, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

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 utricle is 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 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 sinclairii* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/carex-sinclairii/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

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