Carex solandri

COMMON NAMES
forest sedge, Solander's sedge

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Not Threatened
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Sedges

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Dense yellow-green tufts, upper part of leaves and culms drooping. **Culms** 0.10–1 m long, c. 1 mm diameter, trigonous, smooth; basal sheaths red-brown, red-purple to black. **Leaves** < or = culms, 1.5–6.5 mm wide, linear, double-folded, cartilaginous. **Inflorescence** of 5–10 distant spikes 10–50 mm long, nodding on long filiform peduncles; terminal 1–4 spikes male, slender, usually approximate; remaining spikes female with a few male flowers above or below, 3–4 mm diameter, usually almost black, lowermost spikes often compound; subtending bracts leafy, > inflorescence. **Glumes** (excluding awn) ± = or < utricles, ovate, lanceolate, entire or rarely emarginate, light or dark brown, membranous, midrib produced to a scabrid awn of varying length. **Utricles** 2–3 mm long, slightly > 1 mm diameter, plano-convex, unequally biconvex or subtrigonous, fusiform or ovoid, turgid, dark red-brown to almost black, occasionally light brown, pale yellow towards the base, surface smooth, occasionally faintly nerved at the base, shining; scarcely narrowed above to a bidentate beak < 0.5 mm. long, margins smooth or occasionally scabrid, orifice us. scabrid; rarely contracted to a stipe c. 0.2 mm. long. **Stigmas** 3. **Nut** c. 1 mm. long, trigonous, obovoid, cream, surface minutely but deeply pitted giving angles of nut a serrate appearance.

SIMILAR TAXA
Carex solandri is most often confused with *C. dissita* Boott, especially as both species often grow together. *Carex dissita* differs from *C. solandri* by the distant, dark brown, rather short and stout, usually shortly pedunculate female spikes. Further, the utricles are also distinctly bicoloured basally cream to yellow brown and red-purple to black above. *C. solandri* has long filiform peduncles and uniformly dark coloured utricles (rarely light brown and pale yellow near the base).

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. North, South and Stewart Islands

HABITAT
Coastal to montane. Usually in riparian forest where it may be the dominant sedge of alluvial terraces, and riversides but also colonising wet seepages and slip scars. Usually found in association with C. dissita Boott.

GENUS
Carex

Dome Walkway. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 15/07/2006, Licence: CC BY.

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FAMILY
Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY
Carex solandri Boott

SYNONYMS
Carex dissita Boott var. solandri (Boott) Kük.

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
August–December

FRUITING
October–May

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from fresh seed and by division of established plants. A popular species in cultivation, and often sold incorrectly as *C. dissita*. Prefers a permanently damp, semi-shaded site but once established can tolerate full sun and dry spells.

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.
solandri: Named after Daniel Carlsson Solander (19 February 1733 - 13 May 1782) who was a Swedish naturalist and an apostle of Carl Linnaeus.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY
Key to indigenous and naturalised Carex in New Zealand

NVS CODE
CARSOL

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | Not Threatened
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT Help
The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland" Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.
Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened 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.
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.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (10 August 2006). Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970)

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/carex-solandri/

PDF DATE

25 May 2026