

Carex zotovii

COMMON NAMES

Zotov's bastard grass, Zotov's hook sedge

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)


CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Plants rather open, widely spreading, pale yellow-green tufts; tufts often with only 2–3 distant culms per plant. **Culms** drooping or nodding, 300–600 mm long, < 1 mm diameter, trigonous, glabrous, often scabrid just below inflorescence, basal bracts light brown. **Leaves** 4–6 per culm, < mature culms, 2–5 mm wide, soft, scabrid on margins and on adaxial surface towards apex. **Spikes** 40–80 × 3–6 mm, often bracteate, clavate, male part of spike usually c. 1 mm. diameter and  – ¼ length of whole spike, female flowers 12–32, lax towards base of spike with internodes 4–8 mm long, more crowded above with internodes 0.5–1.0 mm long. **Glumes** ± = utricles, deciduous, ovate, acute or acuminate, hyaline with green midrib or brownish. **Utricles** 5.0–6.0 × c. 1.5 mm, trigonous or triquetrous, ovoid, usually smooth except for a prominent lateral nerve, but occasionally with a few less distinct nerves, green to grey-brown, stipe 1.0–1.5 mm long, beak 1–2 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Carex zotovii is most similar to *C. horizontalis* (Colenso) K.A.Ford and *Carex minor* (Kük.) K.A.Ford. From *Carex horizontalis* it can be distinguished by its wider (2.5–5.0 cf. 1.5–2.0 mm), pale green to yellow-green, rather than dark green leaves, loosely tufted, spreading and more open growth habit, with fewer culms rather than the erect, many-culmed, densely tufted growth habit typical of *C. horizontalis*. *Carex minor* is superficially similar but the glumes in the lower part of the spike are > utricles. In *C. zotovii* the glumes are equal to or < utricles in the lower part of the spike, and in mature spikes the utricles spread out at 90° from the rachis, while those of *C. minor* stay contracted.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island, South Island (mainly Nelson, Otago and Southland), Stewart and Chatham Islands.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane (up to 1000 m a.s.l.) usually on ridge lines in tall forest, favouring well drained but moist soils. Rarely in tall scrub.

GENUS

Carex

FAMILY

Cyperaceae



Waitakere. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 29/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



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AUTHORITY

Carex zotovii (Hamlin) K.A.Ford

SYNONYMS

Uncinia zotovii Hamlin

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October–December

FRUITING

November–May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by division of established plants—though these may take a while to settle. Prefers moist soil in a semi-shaded site. However, once established will tolerate a wide range of conditions except waterlogging.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ETYMOLOGY

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

zotovii: After Victor Dmitrievich Zotov (1908 - 1977), one of New Zealand's most eminent botanists who studied the vegetation of NZ high country and the classification of NZ grasses. He also completed a detailed study of the vegetation of the Tararua Range.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

NVS CODE

CARZOT

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

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.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970). Fact sheet prepared by Peter J. de Lange 17 August 2006. Some of this factsheet information is derived from [Flora of New Zealand Online](#) and is used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand](#) licence.

MORE INFORMATION

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

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