

Cyperus eragrostis

COMMON NAMES

umbrella sedge

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Tufted leafy sedge, with triangular stems up to 90 cm tall, leaves arranged in threes, with a group of 5 to 7 green round flowerheads, each made up of broad flattened flower spikes, with 5 to 8 long grass-like leaves immediately under this, at the end of flower stalk.

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizome short, thick, woody. **Stems** 25–90 cm high, stout, obtusely trigonous, smooth, leafy and ± thickened at base. **Leaves** usually < stems, 4–8 mm wide, flat, margins finely serrate; sheaths dark purple-brown.

Involucral bracts 5–8, leaf like, unequal, often very much > inflorescence.

Inflorescence a compound umbel, rather variable in size; rays 5–7–(9), of unequal length, each with a dense pale green to yellow-green globose or hemispherical spike at tip, 1–2 cm diam. **Spikelets** many, densely crowded, much compressed, ± 5–12 × 3 mm, ovoid-oblong, subacute.

Glumes many, ± 2 mm long, densely imbricate, ovate, membranous, cells very distinct, whitish-cream to light brown, 1-distinct lateral nerve on each side, keel green, tip slightly recurved. **Stamen** 1. **Style-branches** 3.

Nut ± ½ length of glume, trigonous, obovoid brown (Healy and Edgar, 1980).

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to other *Cyperus* species, distinguished from the other species by the globular yellow-green flowerheads and basal leaves.

DISTRIBUTION

Scattered throughout both islands, locally abundant.

HABITAT

Wet areas such as the banks of rivers and streams, swamps, ditches.

GENUS

Cyperus

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Cyperus eragrostis Lam.



Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 06/02/2006, Licence: CC BY.



Western Hutt hills. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 28/07/2013, Licence: CC BY.

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Summer to autumn

FRUITING

Summer to autumn

YEAR NATURALISED

1871

ORIGIN

North and South America

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, possibly ornamental plant, seed or soil contaminant.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Can be controlled manually, mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seed dispersed by contaminated machinery.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

cyperus: From the ancient Greek name for sedge, kypeiros

eragrostis: From the Greek eros 'love' and agrostis 'grass'

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

NVS CODE

CYPERA

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Champion P. et al. 2020. Freshwater Invasive Species of New Zealand 2020. NIWA publication.

<https://docs.niwa.co.nz/library/public/FreInSpec.pdf>

Healy AJ, Edgar E. 1980. Flora of New Zealand, Volume III. Adventive Cyperaceous, Petalous and Spathaceous Monocotyledons. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 220 p.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA. 1989. Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington, NZ. 319 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description from Healy and Edgar (1980). 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/cyperus-eragrostis/>

PDF DATE

08 June 2026