

Cyperus polystachyos

COMMON NAME

bunchy sedge

SYNONYMS

Pycneus polystachyos (Rottb.) Domin

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Cyperus polystachyos Rottb.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Tufted yellow-green leafy sedge, with triangular stems up to 50 cm tall, leaves arranged in threes, with up to 7 upright yellow-green to pale brown ragged flowerheads, each made up of narrow flattened flower spikes, with 3 to 6 long grass-like leaves immediately under this, at the end of flower stalk.

DISTRIBUTION

Restricted to Northland and Auckland where it is locally common.

HABITAT

Wet pasture, margins of water bodies and drains.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Densely tufted annual to perennial. **Stems** to 50 cm tall, 3-angled, leafy at base. **Leaves** < stems, 2–3 mm wide, smooth; sheaths purple-brown, sometimes with a few transverse septa. **Involucral bracts** 3–6, leaf-like, > inflorescence. **Inflorescence** capitate or with rays to 4 cm long. **Spikelets** ± stiffly erect in rather dense clusters, narrow-linear, acute, ± 15 × 1.5 mm. **Glumes** ± 2 mm long, densely imbricate, membranous, subobtusely, chestnut or straw-coloured with green keel. **Stamens** 2. style-branches 2. **Nut** ± ½ length of glume, oblong, compressed-biconvex, brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to and often growing with *Cyperus eragrostis* and *C. congestus*, differing by the upright, close set inflorescence, the flowerheads are not globular.

FLOWERING

Summer to autumn

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Green

FRUITING

Summer to autumn



Lake Waiporohita, Karikari Peninsula.
Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken:
21/02/2011, Licence: CC BY.

LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by contaminated machinery.

YEAR NATURALISED

1953

ORIGIN

Pantropical and subtropical, also more temperate Australia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, possibly ornamental plant, seed or soil contaminant.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not controlled in New Zealand.

ETYMOLOGY

cyperus: From the ancient Greek name for sedge, kypeiros

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description from Healy and Edgar (1980).

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.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cyperus-polystachyos/>