

Cyperus polystachyos

COMMON NAMES

bunchy sedge

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

SIMPLIFIED 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.

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Green

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, subobtuse, 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.

DISTRIBUTION

Restricted to Northland and Auckland where it is locally common.

HABITAT

Wet pasture, margins of water bodies and drains.

GENUS

Cyperus

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Cyperus polystachyos Rottb.

SYNONYMS

Pycnus polystachyos (Rottb.) Domin



Lake Waiporohita, Karikari Peninsula.
Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken:
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ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Summer to autumn

FRUITING

Summer to autumn

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.

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

NVS CODE

CYPPOL

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

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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

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

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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