

Isolepis aucklandica

SYNONYMS

Isolepis subcucullata Bergg.; *Isolepis cartilaginea* var. *rigida* Bergg.; *Scirpus aucklandicus* (Hook.f.) Boeck; *S. aucklandicus* var. *subcucullata* (Bergg.) C.B. Clarke; *Scirpus muscosus* Kirk;

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Isolepis aucklandica Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

ISOAUC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North, South, Stewart, Antipodes, Auckland, Campbell, Macquarie Islands. Also in Australia.

HABITAT

Coastal to alpine (up to 1300 m a.s.l.). Mostly montane in the northern part of its range. A species of boggy ground in forest as well as wetlands, often growing on peaty turf on forest margins or on permanently damp rock shelves or seepages in forest.

FEATURES

Widely creeping, bright green, leafy, rhizomatous sedge forming large, turfy patches. Rhizome c.0.5 mm. diameter. Culms 10.0–80.0 x c.0.5 mm, bright green above, red-brown towards the base, rigid. Leaves up to 6 per culm, usually > culms, c.0.5 mm wide, or often setaceous and filiform, coriaceous, curved; sheaths with truncate orifice, pale brown and membranous, often streaked with red, rarely entirely dark red-purple. Inflorescence apparently lateral, of 1–2 narrow-oblong spikelets, 1.0–4.0 x 0.5–2 mm, partly hidden by the enlarged base of a subtending bract up to 5 times length of spikelet. Glumes 1.5–2.5 mm long, lanceolate, acute, caducous, green to pale grey-brown with reddish marks or deep red-purple, margins tapered and often pinched in at the tip below the green, thickened, ± excurrent keel. Hypogynous bristles 0. Stamens 3. Style-branches 3. Nut 1–2 mm long, slightly > 0.5 mm wide, almost = glume, elliptical, ± trigonous with rounded angles, almost white to yellowish, or grey- to red-brown, smooth and shining but very finely reticulate, tapering towards the apiculate black tip.



Mt Holdsworth, February. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Mount Ruapehu.

SIMILAR TAXA

Isolepis aucklandica is easily distinguished by its bright green colour; leaves mostly > culms; 3 stamens per glume (rarely 1-2 in upper portion of spikelet); by the glume-margins and nut tapering toward the tip; and by the cream nut.

FLOWERING

October - December

FRUITING

November - May

LIFE CYCLE

Nuts are dispersed by water and possibly granivory and attachment (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by division of established plants. Requires a permanently moist, acidic soil to flourish. Best grown in partial to full shade.

ETYMOLOGY

isolepis: From the Greek isos (equal) and lepis (scale)

aucklandica: Of the Auckland Islands

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Johnson, A.T. and Smith, H.A 1986: *Plant Names Simplified: Their pronunciation, derivation and meaning*. Landsman Bookshop Ltd: Buckenhill, UK.

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: *Flora of New Zealand*. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.

Thorsen, M.J.; Dickinson, K.J.M.; Seddon, P.J. 2009: Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285-309.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/isolepis-aucklandica/>