

Isolepis levynsiana

COMMON NAMES

tiny flatsedge

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Tiny fine-leaved grass- or rush-like clump or mat forming plant, up to 10 cm tall, with flattened head heads, usually 2 per stem.

FLOWER COLOURS

Green

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small tufted annual, 2–10 cm high. **Stems** numerous, filiform. **Leaves** 1–2 basal, much > stems, setaceous; sheaths hyaline, mostly colourless but occasionally red-tinged at base. **Inflorescence** a solitary cluster of (1)–2–(5) comparatively large, digitate, very compressed spikelets varying from whitish-green to greenish-brown; lower subtending bract setaceous, < or > inflorescence, appearing as a continuation of the stem, occasionally a second setaceous bract or an upper spikelet with a short glume-like bract. **Spikelets** $\pm 3\text{--}8 \times 2\text{--}3$ mm, oblong to ovate-lanceolate. **Glumes** many, densely imbricate, ± 2 mm long, obtuse, distinctly nerved, margins occasionally brown-splotched, keel green, later brown, tip slightly spreading. **Stamens** 1 or 2. **Style-branches** 3. **Nut** slightly > $\frac{1}{2}$ length of glume, ellipsoid, acutely triquetrous.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to many other Isolepis species and also young toad rush (*Juncus bufonius*), but none of these plants produce flattened spikelets.

DISTRIBUTION

Scattered through the North Island and Nelson in the South Island, usually lowland.

HABITAT

Margins of water bodies, wet roadsides.

GENUS

Isolepis

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Isolepis levynsiana Muasya et D.A.Simpson

SYNONYMS

Cyperus tenellus L.f. Until recently known as Cyperus tenellus L.f. Isolepis tenellus (L.f.) Muasya et D.A.Simpson is illegitimate



Isolepis levynsiana. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



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ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Throughout most of the year

FRUITING

Throughout most of the year

YEAR NATURALISED

1863

ORIGIN

South Africa and Australia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Rarely controlled, but can be controlled manually, mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seed dispersed by water or contaminated machinery.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

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

NVS CODE

ISOLEV

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

Johnson AT, Smith HA. 1986. Plant Names Simplified: Their pronunciation, derivation and meaning. Landsman Bookshop Ltd, Buckenhill, UK.

Muasya AM, Simpson DA, Smets E. 2007. *Isolepis levynsiana*, a new name for *Cyperus tenellus* (Cyperaceae). *Novon* 17: 59.

Popay I, Champion P, James T. 2010. An illustrated guide to common weeds of New Zealand, 3rd edition. NZ Plant Protection Society Inc, Christchurch, NZ. 416 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Factsheet descriptions from Croasdale et al., (1994).

MORE INFORMATION

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

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