

# Ruppia megacarpa

## COMMON NAME

Horses mane weed, lakeweed

## SYNONYMS

None

## FAMILY

Ruppiaceae

## AUTHORITY

Ruppia megacarpa R.Mason

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## NVS CODE

RUPMEG

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 20

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. North, South and Chatham Islands. Present in Australia

## HABITAT

Saline ponds, lagoons and slow flowing brackish streams. Predominantly coastal but occasionally extending inland

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizome undistinguished; stems rather long usually with abundant zigzag branching. Leaves (40–)100–150(–200) × (0.2–)0.4–0.5(–0.7) mm, bright to olive green, almost filiform but broad-oblong in cross-section; apex bidentate, often most minutely denticulate; sheath (10–)15–25(–40) mm long, auriculate. Peduncles to 0.3 m long, usually reddish, scarcely thicker below flowers, becoming spirally coiled as fruit matures. Flowers protandrous; carpels 4, occasionally 5–6 in upper flower. Podogynes stout, tapering towards base. Achenes 40–45(–50) mm long, gibbous, olive-green, sometimes red-punctate; mesocarp thick; endocarp tuberculate, black, with 2 triangular apertures opposite to and about on level of top of operculum; beak c.1.3 mm long.



Ruppia megacarpa. Photographer: Rohan Wells, Licence: All rights reserved.



Ruppia megacarpa. Photographer: Rohan Wells, Licence: All rights reserved.

### **SIMILAR TAXA**

*Ruppia polycarpa* differs from *R. megacarpa* by its curved to straight rather than zig-zagged branching pattern, obtuse rather than bidentate leaf apices; carpels usually 4 per flower (rather than (5-)8(-16)), and fruits which are 4-5 mm long rather than < 3 mm long. *Stuckenia pectinata* which sometimes grows with both species of *Ruppia* is superficially similar. It is easily distinguished from both *Ruppia* species by the ligulate acute-tipped leaves, tuberous stems, and spicate inflorescences.

### **FLOWERING**

October - February

### **FRUITING**

November - April

### **PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE**

Uncertain. Probably easily grown in suitable conditions but *Ruppia* is unlikely to be widely cultivated (if at all). Most people regard it as a pest and are only interested in eradicating it.

### **ETYMOLOGY**

**ruppia:** Named after Heinrich Bernhard Ruppius (1689-1719), an 18th century German botanist

### **WHERE TO BUY**

Not commercially available

### **ATTRIBUTION**

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 2 March 2011. Description adapted from Moore & Edgar (1970).

### **REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING**

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

### **NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION**

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Ruppia megacarpa* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ruppia-megacarpa/> (Date website was queried)

### **MORE INFORMATION**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ruppia-megacarpa/>