# Ruppia polycarpa

# **COMMON NAME**

Horses mane weed, lakeweed

### **SYNONYMS**

None

### **FAMILY**

Ruppiaceae

### **AUTHORITY**

Ruppia polycarpa R.Mason

### **FLORA CATEGORY**

Vascular - Native

# **ENDEMIC TAXON**

No

## **ENDEMIC GENUS**

Nο

## **ENDEMIC FAMILY**

Nο

### STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## **CHROMOSOME NUMBER**

2n = 18

## **CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS**

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

### **PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES**

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

### **DISTRIBUTION**

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

# HABITAT

Saline ponds, lagoons, brackish streams, slow flowing fresh water streams and fresh water lakes from sea level to 700 m a.s.l.

### WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

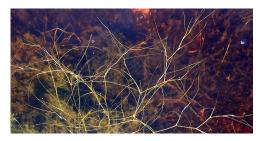
**OBL: Obligate Wetland** 

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

# **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

Rhizome prominent, and either much branched and congested giving rise to short stems and long leaves in dense grass-like mats or less closely branched with longer, sparsely branched stems. Leaves  $c.50-300 \times 0.3-0.4$  mm, dark green, almost filiform and only slightly flattened; apex obtuse, often most minutely denticulate; sheath (10-)25–35–50 mm long, auricles narrow. Peduncles to 0.5 m long, usually conspicuously thicker just below flowers, becoming spirally coiled as fruit matures. Flowers protandrous; carpels (5-)8(-16). Podogynes slender. Achenes (1.7-)2(-2.7) mm long, asymmetric, brown; mesocarp thin; endocarp smooth, black, with 2 longitudinal slits opposite to and about on level of top of operculum; beak 0.2–0.3 mm long.





Ruppia polycarpa (growth habit) - Chatham Islands, Rekohu (Chatham Island), Lake Te Wapu outlet, Kaiangaroa Beach. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Date taken: 29/01/2020, Licence: CC BY.



Ruppia polycarpa (inflorescence) Chatham Islands, Rekohu (Chatham Island), Lake Te Wapu outlet, Kaiangaroa Beach. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Date taken: 29/01/2020, Licence: CC BY.

### **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**

October - May

# **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 polycarpa Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <a href="https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ruppia-polycarpa/">https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ruppia-polycarpa/</a> (Date website was queried)

## **MORE INFORMATION**

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ruppia-polycarpa/