

Schoenus carsei

BIOSTATUS

Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, RR, TO
[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stout rush-like sedge of mid-acid to acidic peat bogs and mires.

Rhizomes short, 3 mm diam., covered in closely appressed red-purple bracts. **Culms** 600–900 mm, c. 1 mm diam., densely tufted light green, grass-green to orange-green. **Leaves** reduced to brown, mucronate sheaths, the uppermost mucro often elongating greatly, mouth of sheath not ciliate. **Panicle** 80–150–(220) mm long, very slender, fascicles distant, of 3–4 branchlets, subtended by short sheath similar to those of culm base; branchlets filiform, flexuous, simple or branched again. **Spikelets** single at tips of branchlets, 7–10 mm, 2-flowered, very narrow, compressed, linear lanceolate, grey-brown. **Glumes** 5–7, imbricating, lanceolate, acute, hyaline except near midrib, margins not ciliate, 3–4 lower glumes, upper most glume empty. **Hypogynous bristles** 0–(3), minute. **Stamens** 3. **Style-branches** 3. **Nut** 2 × 1 mm, oblong-ovoid, obtuse, smooth, white.

SIMILAR TAXA

Frequently confused with *Netrostylis capillaris* (F.Muell.) R.L.Barrett, J.J.Bruhl et K.L.Wilson, a similar rush-like plant with very fine yellow-green culms, which often grows in association with *S. carsei*. From that genus and species, *S. carsei* differs by its wider culms, larger panicles bearing more numerous flowers and by the rhacilla of the spikelet flexuous (wavy), short between sterile nodes and elongated between the fertile nodes.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. Present In Australia. In New Zealand confined to the North Island where it is now known from North Cape to Hinehopu mire in the Rotorua Lakes district. It formerly grew at Ngaere Swamp (Taranaki).

HABITAT

Coastal, lowland to montane. Usually in moderately fertile to acid wetlands. Often on the margins of burn pools or other slow moving water channels, where it often grows in association with *Baumea rubiginosa*, *B. teretifolia*, *Tetraria capillaris* and *Empodisma minus*. Occasionally associated with the margins of small ephemeral dune ponds.

THREATS

Threatened by wetland drainage, eutrophication, modification and the spread of naturalised wetland weeds. There are few recent records, and the majority of these come from the Whangamarino and Opuatia wetlands in the Huntly Basin.

GENUS

Schoenus

FAMILY

Cyperaceae



Locally common in peatbog/wetlands, Far North. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 17/01/2020, Licence: CC BY.



Locally common in peatbog/wetlands, Far North. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 17/01/2020, Licence: CC BY.

AUTHORITY

Schoenus carsei Cheeseman

SYNONYMS

None

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

(September)–October–January

FRUITING

December–May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Can be grown from the division of whole plants and probably from fresh seed. Dislikes root disturbance and requires permanently waterlogged substrates

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ETYMOLOGY

schoenus: Rush

NVS CODE

SCHCAR

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = c.60

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DP, RR, TO

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: RR, TO

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP, RR, SO, Sp

2004 | Gradual Decline

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Data Deficient | Qualifiers: PF, RR, SO Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the [“Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland”](#) Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Gardner RO. 1998. *Schoenus carsei* and *Tetraria capillaris*. [Auckland Botanical Society Journal 53: 38–40](#).

Gardner RO. 1998. *Schoenus carsei* revisited. [Auckland Botanical Society Journal 53: 56–57](#).

Moore LB, Edgar E. 1970. Flora of New Zealand, Volume II. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Monocotyledones except Gramineae. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 354 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet by P.J. de Lange (28 July 2005). Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).
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NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/schoenus-carsei/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026