

Sporadanthus traversii

COMMON NAME

Chatham Island bamboo rush,

SYNONYMS

Lepyrodia traversii F.Muell.

FAMILY

Restionaceae

AUTHORITY

Sporadanthus traversii (F.Muell.) F.Muell.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Rushes & Allied Plants

NVS CODE

SPOTRA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 18

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE, OL

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE, OL

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: CD, ST, IE

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Chatham Island only

HABITAT

Found mainly on wet peat domes, also occurring in peaty dune hollows and on lake margins.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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



Sporadanthus traversii restiad bog, Taia, Chatham (Rekohu) Island, July 2002.
Photographer: John Sawyer



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FEATURES

Slender, upright to sprawling dioecious perennial, 0.6-1.8(-2.5) m tall, forming dense somewhat flaccid rafts. Rhizome 3-10 mm diameter, horizontal, sparingly branched, covered with tightly appressed, overlapping scales; scales 3-12 × 2-12 mm, broadly ovate to ± deltoid, chartaceous, dark brown, lustrous, apex rounded and mucronate. Roots 3-4 mm diameter, 50-120 mm long, grey, with few (if any) rootlets. Culms up to 2 m long, 1-5 mm diameter, gradually tapering toward distal end, firm, flexuose, slender, terete, smooth, dark green-brown to brown, often blotched black; branched in upper 2/3, branches numerous, firm, flexuose, scrambling, terete; basal 50-65 mm of culm slightly swollen with soft, spongy, light brown tissue. Culm base with 3-7 loosely appressed, overlapping scales; scales 8-25 × 10-12 mm, ovate to narrowly ovate, coriaceous, light brown to brown, nerves distinct, apex rounded and mucronate. Leaves along culm solitary, distant; lamina 15-30 × 6-11 mm, narrowly ovate, chartaceous, tan, brown to grey-brown, appressed to and sheathing culm, nerves distinct; margins entire to praemorse; apex rounded, with mucronate. Inflorescence a terminal panicle, often with cymose branching near base, 30-150(-200) mm long, dark dull brown, upright to spreading; male and female inflorescences sparse, not crowded; flowers subtended by 2 bractlets, subtended by 1 bract; inflorescence branchlets subtended by reduced leaves. Bracts 5.5-10.0 × 2.6-3.0 mm, ovate, narrowly ovate to lanceolate, light brown, membranous, apex acuminate, margins fimbriate. Bractlets 5.2-5.8 × 1.0-1.6 mm, lanceolate, membranous, light brown to yellow-brown, apex acuminate, margins entire. Flowers pedicellate to almost sessile. Tepals 6, in 2 whorls of 3, 4.0-6.0 × 1.0-1.2 mm, lanceolate, light brown, channelled, keeled, apex strongly acuminate. Male flowers with 3 stamens; filaments 1.6-3.0 mm long, anthers 1.8-2.3 mm long, cream, pollen yellow; pistil rudimentary. Female flowers with 1 pistil; style 1.0-1.5 mm long, pale orange, papillose on upper surface; ovary 0.6-0.7 × 0.3-0.4 mm, ellipsoid, brown to light brown, glossy; staminodes 3, each 1.5-1.6 mm long. Fruit 3.0-3.5 × 1.0-1.2 mm, oblong-ellipsoid, light brown to brown, surmounted by persistent short style; indehiscent. Seed 1.2-1.5 × 0.9-1.0 mm, oblong to broadly ovate, dark brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from the North Island endemic *Sporadanthus ferrugineus* de Lange, Heenan et B.D.Clarkson by its restriction to Chatham Island; by the culms which are 1-5 mm rather than 10-15 diameter; tepals which are keeled and acuminate rather than not keeled and mucronate, and 4-6 mm rather than 2-3 mm long; by the fruit which is oblong-ellipsoid rather than ellipsoid, 3.0-3.5 mm rather than 1.0-1.5 mm long, and indehiscent; and by the seed which is 1.2-1.5 × 0.9-1.0 mm rather than 0.7-0.8 × 0.5-0.6 mm long.

FLOWERING

October - February

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, Yellow

FRUITING

February - March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult - should not be removed from the wild. Has been grown from seed but difficult to maintain.

THREATS

It is threatened by burning, and to a lesser extent ploughing and sowing pasture species and also by prolonged cattle grazing in places. The weed species Chilean guava (*Ugni molinae*) is a threat to some populations.

ETYMOLOGY

traversii: Named after William Thomas Locke Travers (1819-1903) who was an Irish lawyer, magistrate, politician, explorer, naturalist, photographer. He lived in New Zealand from 1849 and was a fellow of the Linnean Society.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 18 January 2005. Description adapted from de Lange et al. (1999).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Clarkson, B.D.; Clarkson, B.R. 1999: Taxonomy, ecology, and conservation of *Sporadanthus* (Restionaceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 37: 413-431

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Sporadanthus traversii* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/sporadanthus-traversii/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/sporadanthus-traversii/>