

Carex talbotii

COMMON NAMES

Berggren's sedge, Talbot's sedge

BIOSTATUS

Native

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shortly rhizomatous, tufted dark purple red, wine-red, or orange red, tufted, small sedge. **Culms** 15–30 mm long, glabrous, terete, distinctly flattened above, almost completely enclosed by light brown leaf-sheaths. **Leaves** 30–60 × 1–2.5–3 mm, linear, concavo-convex, almost flat, nerves very distinct, margins not usually scabrid except towards the rather bluntly obtuse apex. **Spikes** 3–4–(6); terminal spike male, distinctly pedunculate; remaining spikes female, 5–8 mm long, ovate, sessile or shortly pedunculate, crowded at same level round base of male spike; leaf-like subtending bracts > inflorescence. **Glumes** rather < utricles, ovate, cuspidate, or entire and obtuse, membranous, red-brown with a paler brown midrib. **Utricles** 2–3 × 1.5 mm, biconvex or rarely subtrigonal, elliptic-oblong, turgid, red-brown to dark red-purple above, yellow below, distinctly nerved at first, smooth at maturity, margins glabrous; beak minute with the scabrid crura very shortly bifid to almost truncate; stipe 0.2 mm long, stout. **Stigmas** 2–3. **Nut** 1.5 mm long, trigonous.

SIMILAR TAXA

The remarkable broadly concavo-convex almost flat leaves with the distinctively bluntly obtuse leaf tips are unique to this species in New Zealand. Its nearest relatives would seem to be *C. decurtata* and *C. hectorii*. From *C. decurtata*, *C. talbotii* differs by broadly concavo-convex flat leaves which taper little (if at all) toward the obtuse tip and from *C. hectorii* by its purple red, wine-red, or orange red, broad obtuse tipped leaves. From both *C. decurtata* and *C. hectorii*, *C. talbotii* further differs by its utricle colour which is characteristically red-brown to dark red-purple above, yellow below, rather than light brown (*C. decurtata*) or dark brown (*C. hectorii*).

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands. In the North Island restricted to the Central Ranges and Mt Ruapehu where it is known from one alpine flush (Ruapehu) and one site in the Moawhango. In the South Island mainly easterly from Lake Tennyson south. Apparently not known from Marlborough or Westland.

HABITAT

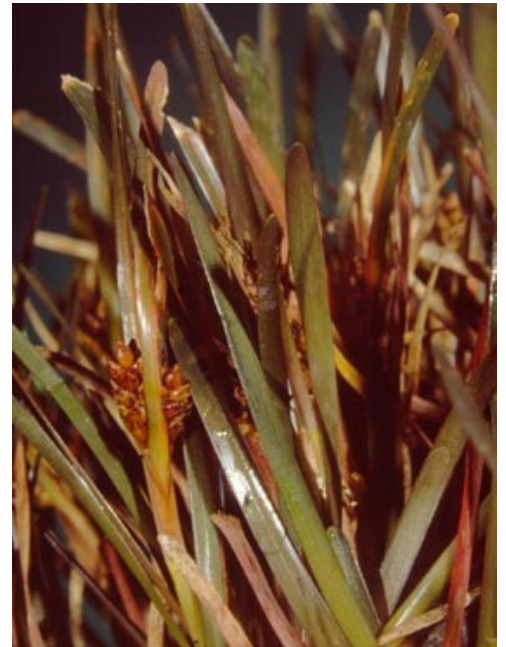
A montane to subalpine (rarely lowland in the southern part of its range) wetland species inhabiting lake, tarn, pond, and stream side margins. It has also been collected from turfs bordering ephemeral wetlands.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp, DPR



In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 28/10/2003, Licence: CC BY.



Rastus Burn, Remarkables (from Jan 92); photo Jan 94. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

THREATS

A biologically sparse species which is not so much threatened as nationally uncommon. However, some populations are now at risk through competition from taller and faster growing wetland weed species.

DETAILED TAXONOMY

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex talbotii Kottaim.

SYNONYMS

Carex berggrenii Petrie (published in 1886) is deemed illegitimate because of the earlier named *Carex berggrenii* Heer (published in 1870)

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

ECOLOGY

FLOWERING

October–February

FRUITING

October–June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in small pots doing best in pots that are partially submerged in water. Can be grown in a rockery, provided it is kept damp and free from competition. An attractive sedge which deserves to be more widely cultivated than it currently is.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

OTHER INFORMATION

ETYMOLOGY

carex: Latin name for a species of sedge, now applied to the whole group.

talbotii: Named for Harry Talbot (1898-1982), a plant collector

NVS CODE

CARTAL

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 60

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: PD, Sp

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Sparse

REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

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NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/carex-talbotii/>

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