

Carex enysii

COMMON NAME

Enys's sedge

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex enysii Petrie

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

CARENY

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Sparse

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island and South Island. Scarce in the North Island where it is known from two sites (Maungaharuru Range and Mt Ruapehu).

HABITAT

A species of open, moist stony ground, particularly on or near limestone or chlorite schists. Usually found within tussock grassland or associated subalpine scrub. Sometimes present in montane forest.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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



Mount Arthur (from a specimen collected by Graeme Jane). Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 23/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Herbarium specimen: AK 290626.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shortly rhizomatous, swarding dark green to yellow-green diminutive sedge forming a dense, compact turf amongst stones and tussocks. **Culms** 0–15–100 × 0.2–0.4–(0.5) mm, terete, shallowly grooved; basal sheaths chestnut-brown to yellow-brown. Leaves about equal in length to culms, 0.3 mm wide, plano-convex, hair-like, lamina involute just above wide brown sheath, margins smooth, apex obtuse. **Inflorescence** solitary, terminal, spike of tightly clustered flowers; female flowers 2–3 overtopping the 1–2 male flowers. **Glumes**: lowermost female glume bractiform, 4–7 mm long; upper female glumes 3 mm long, ovate, acute, brown, midrib green, margin hyaline. **Utricles** 2.5–3 × 1–2 mm, ovoid, sub-terete, pale brown to very light brown, irrespective of colour becoming distinctly paler toward the base, smooth, glabrous, tapered to a darker beak 1 mm long with a hyaline, oblique orifice; stipe minute or absent. **Stigmas** 3. **Rhachilla** enclosed within utricle 1 × 0.3 mm at the base, tapering to a bluntly truncate apex. **Nut** 1.5 mm long, obtusely trigonous.

SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *C. acicularis* Boott in Hook.f., and *C. allanii* Hamlin, and distinguished from both by the glabrous rather than scabrid utricle beak and shorter rhachilla (1 mm compared with 2 mm in the other two species).

FLOWERING

October–December

FRUITING

October–April

LIFE CYCLE

Nuts surrounded by inflated utricles are dispersed by granivory and wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from rooted pieces and fresh seed but slow growing and somewhat fickle. Best kept in a pot, in full sun with a permanently moist soil.

THREATS

Biologically sparse and probably also overlooked as it is rather small and inconspicuous. At present it does not seem to be threatened although some populations are probably vulnerable to invasive weeds.

ETYMOLOGY

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

ensyii: Named in honour of John Davies Enys (1837–1912), a Cornish geologist, biologist and farmer, who owned Castle Hill Station in Canterbury from 1867 to 1891.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (8 August 2007). Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970)

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.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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