

# Carex traversii

## COMMON NAME

Travers's sedge

## SYNONYMS

None

## FAMILY

Cyperaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Carex traversii* Kirk

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

## NVS CODE

CARTRV

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, eastern Nelson, Red Hills and Mt Dun ultramafic are only.

## HABITAT

An ultramafic endemic confined to open sites within seepages, rubbly ground or damp scree. Sometimes it can be found on boulders or in open, dry ground.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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



Herbarium specimen: AK 290526.

Photographed with permission of Auckland Institute and Museum. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 23/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



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Photographed with permission of Auckland Institute and Museum. Photographer: Jeremy R.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Short, densely tufted dark red to purple-red sedge of damp ground and seepages within ultramafic zones. **Culms** 100–200 × 1 mm, terete, basal sheaths light brown. **Leaves** usually > culms, rarely ≤ culms, 0.5–1 mm wide, flaccid, lamina plano-convex, margins involute, slightly scabrid towards the filiform usually curled apex. **Inflorescence** of 3–6 more or less approximate spikes; uppermost male, shortly pedunculate; remaining spikes female, sometimes with 1–2 male flowers near base, 5–10 × 5 mm, sessile with occasional lowermost spike rather distantly pedunculate; subtending bracts leafy, > inflorescence. **Glumes** slightly < utricles, membranous, light red-brown with a stouter, paler midrib, acuminate, or with a short scabrid awn. **Utricles** 2.5–3 × 1 mm, subtrigonus to plano-convex, more or less fusiform, dark red-brown, except for the pale beak and the stipe, lateral nerves prominent, remaining nerves faint; beak attenuated, rather narrow, 0.5 mm long, crura acutely bifid, scabrid; stipe hardly contracted, very short. **Stigmas** 3. **Nut** 2 mm long, light brown, trigonus.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Carex traversii* is perhaps closest to *C. druceana* from which it differs by the utricles 2.5–3 mm rather than 2 mm long, these uniformly dark red-brown with a paler beak and stipe, rather than yellowish, with red near the apex and with the beak scarcely evident. *Carex traversii* is an ultramafic endemic of open rubblely ground. It has been confused with the superficially similar *C. uncifolia* Cheeseman, but that species prefers poorly drained habitats and has curled leaf apices, and near sessile culms, with densely crowded spikes.

## FLOWERING

September–January

## FRUITING

October–June

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown by division of whole plants and from fresh seed. Intolerant of competition and does best in a free draining, magnesium enriched soil. An unusual sedge best cultivated in a pot.

## THREATS

A naturally uncommon, range restricted endemic, abundant within suitable habitat within the ultramafics of the Red Hills and Mt Dun.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

**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.

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (10 August 2006). 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-traversii/>