

Schoenus brevifolius

COMMON NAME

bog schoenus, the stabber

SYNONYMS

Chaetospora tenax Hook.f.; *Schoenus tenax* (Hook.f.) Hook.f.; *Schoenus brevifolius* subsp. *tenax* (Hook.f.) Kük.; *Schoenus brevifolius* R.Br. var. *tenax* (Hook.f.) Koyama

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Schoenus brevifolius R.Br.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

SCHBRE

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Inigenous. North and South Islands. Also in Australia, New Caledonia and the Bonin Islands. In New Zealand mainly found from North Cape to about the southern Waikato and Rotorua district. Also recorded from the Nelson area.

HABITAT

Coastal to lower montane (up to 500 m a.s.l.). Preferring peat bogs—often ones dominated by restiads—but also frequent in gumland scrub, and in open, boggy ground within kauri (*Agathis australis* (D.Don) Lindl.) forest.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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



Kopouatai swamp, February. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



At Kopouatai swamp, February. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rush-like sedge up to 1 m tall. **Rhizome** hard, lignaceous and coarse, up to 8 mm diameter, covered with closely appressed, dark red, red-black to black glossy bracts. **Culms** closely packed, rigidly erect, 0.5–1.3 m long, c. 2 mm diameter, dark green to yellow-green, smooth, often shallowly grooved on one side, apex maturing as a hard, grey, woody cap-like spike. **Leaves** reduced to 3–4 very dark red, hard, mucronate sheaths, the 2 uppermost with a short, subulate, erect lamina; orifice of sheath not ciliate. **Panicle** 80–300 mm long, very narrow, upright and stiff, occasionally bent at the apex, with more or less distant fascicles of 3–5 branchlets, each fascicle subtended by a short sheath similar to those at culm base; branchlets flexuous, flattened, with scabrid margins, often branched again, sheaths subtending secondary branchlets ciliate at the mouth. **Spikelet** terminating each branchlet 9–12 mm long, 2–4-flowered, lanceolate, red-brown. **Glumes** 7–14, ovate-lanceolate, acute, margins ciliate towards the apex, 4–6, lower glumes smaller, empty, 2–3 succeeding glumes fertile, uppermost 2–3 glumes sterile. **Hypogynous bristles** 0. **Stamens** usually 2, occasionally 3. **Style-branches** 3. **Nut** 1.5 × 1 mm, cream, turgid, surface distinctly rugose.

SIMILAR TAXA

Differs from the other rush-like *Schoenus* species with open, distantly spaced panicles by the culms which are c. 2 mm diameter and by the nuts which are distinctly rugose.

FLOWERING

September–January

FRUITING

November–June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Can be grown from the division of whole plants and fresh seed but resents root disturbance. Best in a permanently damp, somewhat acidic soil in full sun.

ETYMOLOGY

schoenus: Rush

brevifolius: Short-leaved

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

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.

MORE INFORMATION

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