

# Schoenus tendo

## COMMON NAME

kauri sedge, kauri schoenus

## SYNONYMS

*Chaetospora tendo* Banks et Sol. ex Hook.f.

## FAMILY

Cyperaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Schoenus tendo* (Hook.f.) Hook.f.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

## NVS CODE

SCHTEN

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 70

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island from North Cape to about the southern Waikato, near Awakino and the Bay of Plenty.

## HABITAT

Coastal to lowland. Mostly in gumland or tea tree scrub and in regenerating kauri (*Agathis australis* (D.Don) Lindl.) forest. Sometimes persistent on clay hills covered to pasture. Rarely colonising the margins of peat bogs.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).



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



Oratia Valley, Waitakere Range. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/07/2007, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rush-like sedge up to 1 m tall. **Rhizome** short, hard, lignaceous, up to 4 mm diameter, loosely covered in brown or greyish-brown bracts. **Culms** densely crowded, erect or drooping (often forming dense tangles), 0.4–1.2 m long, c. 1 mm diameter, light green to dark green, glossy. **Leaves** reduced to sheathing mucronate bracts, dark red-purple, almost black, the mucro more elongated in the uppermost bracts; mouth of sheath fringed by cobwebby hairs. **Panicle** 15–120 mm long, very narrow, with more or less distant fascicles of 3–4 branchlets, each fascicle subtended by a sheath 0.5–1.5 mm long, ciliate at the mouth; branchlets flexuous, laterally compressed and toothed along edges, each bearing a solitary spikelet or branched again. **Spikelets** 5–8 mm long, 2–4-flowered, linear-lanceolate, dark brown to almost black. **Glumes** 10–13, ovate lanceolate acute, margins ciliate towards the apex with tangled woolly hairs, the lower 6–8 glumes shorter, empty, 2–4 succeeding glumes fertile, the 2 upper glumes empty. **Hypogynous bristles** 3–6, thread-like, less than or greater than nut. **Stamens** 2. **Style-branches** 2–(3). **Nut** 1.5 × 1.0 mm, pale cream or light brown, unequally biconvex, obovoid, obtuse to retuse, surface smooth.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Easily recognised by the large often drooping green culms, sheaths fringed with cobwebby hairs, and preference for poorly drained clay soils (usually in gumland scrub) or under kauri. It could only be confused with *Schoenus carsei* Cheeseman which is confined to acidic peat bogs and lake margins, has yellow-green to orange-green culms, and whose sheaths lack the distinctive cobwebby orifices diagnostic of *S. tendo*. *Schoenus tendo* also differs from *S. carsei* by having mostly 2 rather than 3 style-branches.

## FLOWERING

September–January

## FRUITING

October–July

## 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

## 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-tendo/>