

# Carex hectorii

## COMMON NAME

Hector's sedge

## SYNONYMS

None

## FAMILY

Cyperaceae

## AUTHORITY

Carex hectorii Petrie

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

## NVS CODE

CARHEC

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = c.64-68

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (known only from Mt Taranaki and adjacent Pouakai Range), South Island (widespread in Nelson and Central Otago).

## HABITAT

A species of montane, subalpine to alpine wetlands, favouring flushes, cushion bogs, seepages or the margins of tarns, ponds usually within tussock grassland.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

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



In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 21/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shortly rhizomatous, loosely tufted blue-green to red-green sedge of open damp ground, seepages, and flushes in tussock grassland, or fringing cushion bogs, tarns and ponds. **Culms** 20–120 × 0.5 mm, usually obscured within light brown leaf-sheaths. **Leaves** longer than culms, 0.5–1.5 mm wide, blue-green (rarely wine red, red-green to bright green), erect, rigid, lamina plano-convex at the base but flattening or occasionally subtrigonus towards the subacute apex, margins distinctly scabrid near the apex. **Inflorescence** of 3–4 contiguous, sessile or shortly pedunculate spikes 0.5–15 mm long. **Spikes** subtended by rigid, leaf-like bracts; these longer than inflorescence; terminal spike male, remaining spikes female. **Glumes** 2.2–2.4 mm long, lanceolate, acuminate, or cuspidate, membranous, brown, with membranous margins and pale green midrib. **Utricles** 2.5–3 × 1.5–2 mm, trigonous, elliptic-ovoid, spreading, conspicuously multi-nerved when immature, maturing glossy and more or less smooth, dark brown; beak 0.5 mm long, slender, acutely bifid, margins usually ciliate-serrate above; stipe short. **Stigmas** 3. **Nut** trigonous.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Could be confused with *Carex uncifolia* Cheeseman, from which it chiefly differs by its wider, blue-green to green (rarely wine-red to red-green) rather than dark red to beetroot red leaves, and smooth, dark brown, rather than distinctly nerved, red-brown mature utricles. *Carex hectorii* is superficially similar to *C. decurtata* Cheeseman from which it differs by its shortly rhizomatous, lax tufted rather than densely (rigidly) tufted habit, usually blue-green rather than bright-green to yellow-green leaves and dark-brown rather than light brown utricles.

## FLOWERING

September–December

## FRUITING

October–July

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from division of whole plants and fresh seed. Does best in a permanently moist soil in full sun. An excellent pot plant. Leaf colour varies and can be unstable in some populations. This species would benefit from some horticultural selection.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

**hectorii**: Named after Sir James Hector, 19th century New Zealand geologist and botanist who was originally from Scotland

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN 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. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Carex hectorii* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/carex-hectorii/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

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