

Carex talbotii

COMMON NAME

Berggren's sedge, Talbot's sedge

SYNONYMS

Carex berggrenii Petrie (published in 1886) is deemed illegitimate because of the earlier named *Carex berggrenii* Heer (published in 1870)

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex talbotii Kottaim.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

CARBER

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 60

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: PD, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Sparse

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands. In the North Island restricted to the Central Ranges and Mt Ruapehu where it is known from one alpine flush (Ruapehu) and one site in the Moawhango. In the South Island mainly easterly from Lake Tennyson south. Apparently not known from Marlborough or Westland.

HABITAT

A montane to subalpine (rarely lowland in the southern part of its range) wetland species inhabiting lake, tarn, pond, and stream side margins. It has also been collected from turfs bordering ephemeral wetlands.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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



In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 28/10/2003, Licence: CC BY.



Hawkdun Range. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shortly rhizomatous, tufted dark purple red, wine-red, or orange red, tufted, small sedge. **Culms** 15–30 mm long, glabrous, terete, distinctly flattened above, almost completely enclosed by light brown leaf-sheaths. **Leaves** 30–60 × 1–2.5–3 mm, linear, concavo-convex, almost flat, nerves very distinct, margins not usually scabrid except towards the rather bluntly obtuse apex. **Spikes** 3–4–(6); terminal spike male, distinctly pedunculate; remaining spikes female, 5–8 mm long, ovate, sessile or shortly pedunculate, crowded at same level round base of male spike; leaf-like subtending bracts > inflorescence. **Glumes** rather < utricles, ovate, cuspidate, or entire and obtuse, membranous, red-brown with a paler brown midrib. **Utricles** 2–3 × 1.5 mm, biconvex or rarely subtrigonal, elliptic-oblong, turgid, red-brown to dark red-purple above, yellow below, distinctly nerved at first, smooth at maturity, margins glabrous; beak minute with the scabrid crura very shortly bifid to almost truncate; stipe 0.2 mm long, stout. **Stigmas** 2–3. **Nut** 1.5 mm long, trigonal.

SIMILAR TAXA

The remarkable broadly concavo-convex almost flat leaves with the distinctively bluntly obtuse leaf tips are unique to this species in New Zealand. Its nearest relatives would seem to be *C. decurtata* and *C. hectorii*. From *C. decurtata*, *C. talbotii* differs by broadly concavo-convex flat leaves which taper little (if at all) toward the obtuse tip and from *C. hectorii* by its purple red, wine-red, or orange red, broad obtuse tipped leaves. From both *C. decurtata* and *C. hectorii*, *C. talbotii* further differs by its utricle colour which is characteristically red-brown to dark red-purple above, yellow below, rather than light brown (*C. decurtata*) or dark brown (*C. hectorii*).

FLOWERING

October–February

FRUITING

October–June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in small pots doing best in pots that are partially submerged in water. Can be grown in a rockery, provided it is kept damp and free from competition. An attractive sedge which deserves to be more widely cultivated than it currently is.

THREATS

A biologically sparse species which is not so much threatened as nationally uncommon. However, some populations are now at risk through competition from taller and faster growing wetland weed species.

ETYMOLOGY

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

talbotii: Named for Harry Talbot (1898–1982), a plant collector

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.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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