

Carex raoulii

COMMON NAME

coastal forest sedge, Raoul's sedge

SYNONYMS

C. macmahoni Petrie

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Carex raoulii Boott

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

CARRAO

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 46

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Data Deficient

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands. Exact distribution uncertain.

HABITAT

Sedge of coastal and lowland shrublands.



Carex raoulii. Photographer: Cathy Jones, Licence: CC BY.



Carex raoulii close up of spikelet. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Densely tufted, tussock-forming, dark-yellow green/wine-red sedge. **Culms** 50–90 cm × 0.5–1 mm, 3-angled (trigonous), scabrid below inflorescence, greatly elongating at maturity, sometimes 3 m long. **Basal sheaths** dark grey-brown. **Leaves** < culms 2–4 mm wide, double-folded, soft, grassy, margins finely scabrid. **Inflorescence** of 5–7 unstalked, closely, clustered 1–4 cm × 4–7 mm spikes, arranged at top of culm, proximal portion of terminal spike female, basally male, remaining spikes all female. **Glumes** (excluding awn) ≤ utricles, very broadly ovate, apex often cleft, membranous, colourless with few small red brown lines, pale cream midrib extending beyond to form finely scabrid awn. **Utricles** 2–3 × 1.5 mm, plano-convex, elliptic-obovoid, light reddish brown, usually with distinct pale brown nerves, slightly winged, usually scabrid on margins, and on both surfaces of upper half. **Beak** 0.5–1 mm long, bifid, orifice finely scabrid. **Stigmas** 2. **Nut** c. 1.5 mm, biconvex, obovoid, light to dark brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to a distinctive, apparently unnamed (C.C. Ogle pers. comm.) sedge which is common throughout the sand country and coastal cliffs and shrublands of the western North Island, as well as locally present elsewhere. That sedge (known by the tag name *C. "raotest"*) differs from *C. raoulii* by the terminal spikelets all male. This is sometimes subtended by a reduced female spikelet.

FLOWERING

No information available

FRUITING

No information available

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown by division and from fresh seed.

THREATS

Because of frequent confusion with the somewhat similar *Carex* 'raotest' the exact distribution and status of *Carex raoulii* is unclear. It is certainly less common than indicated by Moore & Edgar (1970), who included the very common *C. 'raotest'* within *C. raoulii*. Present indications are that *C. raoulii* might be rather uncommon.

ETYMOLOGY

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

raoulii: After Raoul

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-raoulii/>