

# Carex trachycarpa

## COMMON NAME

sedge

## SYNONYMS

None

## FAMILY

Cyperaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Carex trachycarpa* Cheeseman

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

## NVS CODE

CARTRA

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, North West Nelson, Kahurangi National Park mainly in and around Mt Owen, Mt Arthur, Mt Peel and Mt Mytton.

## HABITAT

A calcicole of marble and limestone subalpine to alpine habits where it is found within tussock grassland, herbfield, fell field, gravel and rock pavements, usually in and around small ponds, seepages or flushes.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).



Herbarium specimen: AK 290522.

Photographed with permission of Auckland Institute and Museum. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 23/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Herbarium specimen: AK 290522.

Photographed with permission of Auckland Institute and Museum. Photographer: Jeremy R.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Grassy, distinctly tufted sedge arising from stout, shortly ascending, woody rootstock. **Culms** 70–300 x c. 1 mm, trigonous, grooved, mainly smooth though rather faintly scabrid below inflorescence; basal sheaths light brown. **Leaves** 5–7–(10) per culm, these less than, equal to or even greater than culm length, 2.5 mm wide, channelled, margins finely scabrid toward the apex. **Inflorescence** a compact head 10–15 × 7 mm, composed of densely packed light or dark brown spikes. **Spikes** with 1–3 males at the top, lowermost 1–3 spikes subtended by a membranous, lanceolate bract whose mid vein is extended as a long scabrid awn; this sometimes exceeding the inflorescence in length. **Glumes** equal to or just longer than utricles, ovate, acuminate or occasionally awned, membranous, chestnut-brown to light brown, keel green, scabrid in lowermost glumes entire otherwise, margins hyaline, occasionally very broad towards glume apex. **Utricles** 3 × 1 mm, plano-convex, strongly nerved, dull, minutely papillose all over; slightly tapering to a beak c. 1 mm long with scabrid margins and an oblique, bifid crura; stipe 0.3 mm. **Stigmas** 2. **Nut** 1.5 mm, light yellow-brown, plano-convex, oblong, smooth.

## SIMILAR TAXA

The distinctive grass-like tufted growth habit, conspicuous leaf-like bracts subtended the densely packed spikes of the inflorescence, and the finely (minutely) papillose utricles distinguish this species from other New Zealand carices. In Vol. II of the New Zealand Flora series it keys out closest to the very different *C. pterocarpa* (see comments under that species).

## FLOWERING

November–December

## FRUITING

November–May

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Little known and not commonly cultivated. Plants grow well from fresh seed and by division of established specimens. Probably best kept in a pot and likely to dislike humid or wet climates. This plant is likely to prefer a free draining highly fertile soil.

## THREATS

Not Threatened. A narrow range endemic abundant within its few known habitats, and apparently secure in all of these.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## 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**

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

### **MORE INFORMATION**

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