

Ficinia nodosa

COMMON NAME

wiwi, knobby club rush, ethel sedge

SYNONYMS

Scirpus nodosus Rottb., *Isolepis nodosa* (Rottb.) R.Br., *Scirpoides nodosa* (Rottb.) Sojak; *Holoschoenus nodosus* (Rottb.) Dietr.

FAMILY

Cyperaceae

AUTHORITY

Ficinia nodosa (Rottb.) Goetgh., Muasya et D.A.Simpson

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

NVS CODE

FICNOD

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 30

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. Kermadec, Three Kings, North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands. Widespread in the southern Hemisphere

HABITAT

Mostly coastal but occasional extending into montane area (up to 700 m a.s.l.). In a wide range of habitats but favouring open situations—commonly on sand, especially on sand dunes, sandy beaches and at the back of estuaries. Sometimes colonising sandstone, limestone or volcanic rock outcrops in lowland forest. Rarely in tussock grassland.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).



Coromandel, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Coromandel, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizome short, 5–10 mm diameter, ascending to subhorizontal, woody, covered with red-brown bracts 5–10 mm long. **Culms** numerous, somewhat woody, 0.15–2.0 m, 1–2 mm diameter, yellow-green to bronze-green, densely packed on rhizome, rush-like, rigid and erect (sometimes in lush specimens with upper third curving over), terete or slightly compressed, finely striated when dry. **Leaves** reduced to 3–6 basal sheaths, the uppermost 50–130 mm long, brown or red-brown, the oblique orifice slightly dilated. **Inflorescence** an apparently lateral, solitary, hemispherical head, 7–15 mm wide, comprised of numerous, densely crowded, sessile spikelets; subtending bract continuous with the culm, rigid, erect, pungent, > inflorescence. **Spikelets** 3–4 mm long, ovoid, light brown. **Glumes** broadly ovate, obtuse, margins entire, more or less apiculate, reddish towards the tips, lateral nerves conspicuous. **Hypogynous bristles** 0. **Stamens** 3. **Style-branches** 3. **Nut** 1 mm long, < 1 mm wide, plano-convex to trigonous, apiculate, dark brown to almost black, shining.

SIMILAR TAXA

Easily distinguished from *Isolepis* R.Br. by the larger overall size, stout, woody rhizomes, by the rigid and mostly erect somewhat woody culms, and by the presence of a gynophore.

FLOWERING

September–December

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

November–May

LIFE CYCLE

Nuts are possibly wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by the division of whole plants. Does best when planted in a free draining soil in a sunny site. Ideal in coastal sites but remarkably cold tolerant.

ETYMOLOGY

ficinia: Named after Heinrich David Auguste Ficus, 19th century German botanist

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

CULTURAL IMPORTANCE

Ficinia nodosa is naturalised around the New Zealand World War II, soldier graves at Suda Bay, Crete.

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.

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/ficinia-nodosa/>