

# Isolepis distigmata

## SYNONYMS

*Scirpus sulcatus* var. *distigmatus* C.B.Clarke in Cheeseman

## FAMILY

Cyperaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Isolepis distigmata* (C.B.Clarke) Edgar

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

## NVS CODE

ISODIS

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island, South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands.

## HABITAT

Coastal to montane in fresh water wetlands (eutrophic to oligotrophic). Often forming a floating sedge around lake, pond and stream margins. Sometimes colonising old water troughs and damp pasture.

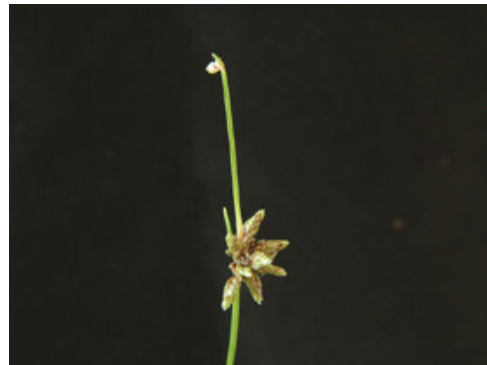
## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

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

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**Culms** 100–500 × < 1.0–1.5 mm, tufted, leafless except for a single, basal, red-purple sheath. **Inflorescence** an apparently lateral, solitary head of numerous densely packed spikelets, often proliferous with 1–3 very slender branchlets each bearing a cluster of spikelets; bract subtending inflorescence variable in length, often > spikelets. **Spikelets** 3–5–(7) × 2–3 mm, oblong or elliptical, red-brown. **Glumes** c. 2 mm long, ovate to obovate, subacute to obtuse, flattened at apex beside keel, light greenish-brown with red markings to almost entirely dark red-purple, with numerous, often distinct, light brown nerves; keel rather narrow, usually prominent only in upper part of glume, occasionally slightly excurrent; hyaline margins entire, usually conspicuous. **Hypogynous bristles** 0. **Stamens** usually 1, rarely 2–3 in lower flowers of spikelet. **Style-branches** 2, very rarely 3. **Nut** c. 1 mm long, slightly > 0.5 mm diameter, < glume, plano-convex or biconvex, obovoid, minutely apiculate with a dark tip, cream to light grey-brown, surface shining but minutely reticulate.



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



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### SIMILAR TAXA

Close to *Isolepis inundata* R.Br. and *I. prolifer* (Rottb.) R.Br. in having no true leaves but only sheathing bracts. It is distinguished from these species by its usually reddish glumes, 2 rather than 3 style-branches, and plano-convex nuts.

### FLOWERING

October–January

### FRUITING

December–April

### LIFE CYCLE

Nuts are dispersed by water and possibly granivory and attachment (Thorsen et al., 2009).

### PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by division of whole plants. Once established rather tolerant of a range of conditions but flourishes best in full sun in a permanently damp soil. An attractive pot plant.

### ETYMOLOGY

**isolepis:** From the Greek isos (equal) and lepis (scale)

**distigmata:** With two stigmas

### WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

### ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Johnson AT, Smith HA. 1986. *Plant Names Simplified: Their pronunciation, derivation and meaning*. Landsman Bookshop Ltd, Buckenhill, UK.

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.

### MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/isolepis-distigmata/>