

# Isolepis levynsiana

## COMMON NAME

tiny flatsedge

## SYNONYMS

*Cyperus tenellus* L.f. Until recently known as *Cyperus tenellus* L.f. *Isolepis tenellus* (L.f.) Muasya et D.A.Simpson is illegitimate

## FAMILY

Cyperaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Isolepis levynsiana* Muasya et D.A.Simpson

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Sedges

## NVS CODE

ISOLEV

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Tiny fine-leaved grass- or rush-like clump or mat forming plant, up to 10 cm tall, with flattened head heads, usually 2 per stem.

## DISTRIBUTION

Scattered through the North Island and Nelson in the South Island, usually lowland.

## HABITAT

Margins of water bodies, wet roadsides.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small tufted annual, 2–10 cm high. **Stems** numerous, filiform. **Leaves** 1–2 basal, much > stems, setaceous; sheaths hyaline, mostly colourless but occasionally red-tinged at base. **Inflorescence** a solitary cluster of (1)–2–(5) comparatively large, digitate, very compressed spikelets varying from whitish-green to greenish-brown; lower subtending bract setaceous, < or > inflorescence, appearing as a continuation of the stem, occasionally a second setaceous bract or an upper spikelet with a short glume-like bract. **Spikelets** ± 3–8 × 2–3 mm, oblong to ovate-lanceolate. **Glumes** many, densely imbricate, ± 2 mm long, obtuse, distinctly nerved, margins occasionally brown-splotched, keel green, later brown, tip slightly spreading. **Stamens** 1 or 2. **Style-branches** 3. **Nut** slightly > ½ length of glume, ellipsoid, acutely triquetrous.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to many other *Isolepis* species and also young toad rush (*Juncus bufonius*), but none of these plants produce flattened spikelets.

## FLOWERING

Throughout most of the year



*Isolepis levynsiana*. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



*Isolepis levynsiana*. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green

## FRUITING

Throughout most of the year

## LIFE CYCLE

Seed dispersed by water or contaminated machinery.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1863

## ORIGIN

South Africa and Australia

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant.

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Rarely controlled, but can be controlled manually, mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

## ATTRIBUTION

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Factsheet descriptions from Croasdale et al., (1994).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Healy AJ, Edgar E. 1980. Flora of New Zealand, Volume III. Adventive Cyperaceous, Petalous and Spathaceous Monocotyledons. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 220 p.

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

Muasya AM, Simpson DA, Smets E. 2007. *Isolepis levynsiana*, a new name for *Cyperus tenellus* (Cyperaceae). *Novon* 17: 59.

Popay I, Champion P, James T. 2010. An illustrated guide to common weeds of New Zealand, 3rd edition. NZ Plant Protection Society Inc, Christchurch, NZ. 416 p.

## MORE INFORMATION

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