



Carex ternaria

Common Name(s):

Southern Cutty Grass, Rautahi

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Endemic. Chatham, Antipodes and Auckland Islands

Habitat:

Widespread along stream, lake and pond margins and in seepages, flushes, and around shallow ephemeral pools. Usually in open, well lit situations but also may be fringing streams running through successional forest.

Features*:

Stoutly rhizomatous, widely creeping, robust sedge forming diffuse dark green to dark glaucous green clumps up to 3 m tall. Plants dying back to rhizomes in cold conditions. Rhizome 5–10 mm diameter, lignaceous, closely covered with red-brown sheaths. Culms 0.3–3.0 m tall, 3–5 mm wide, triquetrous, harshly scabrid; basal sheaths red-brown, margins shredding into fibres with age. Leaves > culms, up to 3.2 m long, 4–17 mm wide, double-folded, margins and keel finely scabrid. Spikes 7–18, in both sexes varying from 10–80 mm in length, distant, peduncles usually \pm = or > spikes, stout, stiff and erect, or more slender and drooping; upper 2–7 spikes male, c.4–6 mm diameter (excluding very prominent awns); lower spikes female, 5–8 mm diameter, lowest spikes geminate or ternate. Glumes of male spikes \pm truncate to acute, with scabrid awns occasionally up to 10 mm long; glumes of female spikes (excluding awn) \pm = utricles, narrow-lanceolate to elliptic-lanceolate, acute, red-brown, membranous, with lighter brown, broad midrib prolonged as a finely scabrid awn up to 6 mm long (awn occasionally very dark red). Utricles c.2.0–3.0 x 1.5–2.0 mm., plano-convex to biconvex, elliptic-obovoid, \pm turgid, light yellow-brown, sometimes red-brown towards the base, nerves 5 or more on each face, margins smooth; beak c.0.2–0.4 mm long, often lighter brown, very narrow, orifice glabrous, very slightly bifid; stipe c.0.3 mm long, narrow. Stigmas 2. Nut 1.5–2.0 mm. long, biconvex, obovoid, lustrous, brown.

Flowering:

October - December

Fruiting:

December - July

Threats:

Not Threatened

*Attribution:

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (10 August 2006). Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970)

References and further reading:

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1423



Caption: Chatham Islands, Lake Rakeinui

Photographer: Peter de Lange



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