



Aciphylla aurea

Common Name(s):

Golden spaniard, golden speargrass

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Habitat:

Montane to low alpine well-drained or arid sites including rocky areas, dry grassland and tussock grassland. 300-1500 m.

Features*:

Very robust tufted yellowish-green herb to 1.5 m tall when in flower. Rosettes single or multiple, to 1 m diameter. Leaves many, stout, 1-pinnate to irregularly 2-pinnate (sometimes only 1 secondary pinna developed), to 70 cm long; sheath thick with thin margins, yellow or yellowish-green, 25 mm wide at apex; stipules stout, to 27 cm long x 5-8 mm wide, tapering, pungent; petioles c. 10-20 cm long x 10-16 mm wide; margins finely serrulate on cartilaginous margin; internodes (inter-pinna spacing) 5-6 cm long; primary pinnae 2-4 pairs, spaced, flat, striate, midrib obscure, c. 20 cm long x 7 mm wide, abruptly narrowing to pungent point; secondary pinnae little shorter, pungent. Flowering stem of male and female similar (female narrower and darker), stout, ribbed, 80 cm or more long, bracted along most of length; bracts +/- erect in male, spreading in female; lower bracts without flowers, yellow; lower bract sheaths to 8 x 1.5 cm tapering to c. 9 mm wide, thin, smooth; lower bract stipules to 8 cm long x 2-3 mm wide, acicular; lower bract lamina usually simple, sometimes bifid, to 22 cm long x 4 mm wide, acicular. Umbels of male plants distributed along peduncle; involucre bracts linear, longer than rays. Umbels of female plants on peduncles up to 15 cm long; umbellules crowded on short rays; involucre bracts linear. Fruit of two mericarps; mericarps oblong-elliptic to elliptic, (3.5-)4.0-6.0(-6.5) mm, with 3-4 narrowly winged ribs and 1-2 reduced to low ridges, vittae obscured

Flowering:

November-December

Fruiting:

January-February

Threats:

Not Threatened

***Attribution:**

Description adapted by Mike Thorsen from Allan (1961), Mark and Adams (1995), Webb and Simpson (2001) and Wilson (1996).

References and further reading:

Allan, H.H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Government Printer, Wellington;

Mark, A.F; Adams, N.M. 1995. New Zealand alpine plants, 2nd Edition. Godwit Publishing, Auckland;

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

Webb, C.J. & Simpson, M.J.A. 2001. Seeds of NZ gymnosperms and dicotyledons. Manuka Press, Christchurch;

Wilson, H.D. 1996. Wild plants of Mount Cook National Park. Manuka Press, Christchurch

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1451



Caption: Macrae's Flat, Otago

Photographer: Jane Gosden



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