



Aciphylla colensoi

Common Name(s):

Giant speargrass, Taramea

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Endemic. North and South Islands. Mt Hikurangi south to mid-Canterbury

Habitat:

Montane to low-alpine grassland and shrubland. 900-1500 m a.s.l.

Features*:

Small to large tufted herb to 1 m tall when in flower. Rosettes single or multiple. Leaves many, stout, 1-pinnate to occasionally 2-pinnate, to 30-50 cm long; sheath thin, to 6 cm long; stipules stiff, simple or occasionally with small accessory pinnules, to 70 cm long x 4 mm wide, tapering, pungent; petioles to 10 cm long, stout, winged; lower internodes (inter-pinna spacing) 3-4 cm long, decreasing up leaf; pinnae 2-4 pairs, slender, strongly serrulate, midrib broad, prominent, red to orange, lower laminae of pinna to c. 20-40(-45) cm long x c. 12 mm wide, narrowing to pungent apex. Flowering stem of male and female similar (female narrower and darker), narrow-oblong, 1 m or more long; lower bract sheaths to 30 x 12 mm tapering to long pungent tips; lower bract lamina ribbed, c. 10 cm long x 3-4 mm wide, with stout prominent red to yellow midrib, apex with pungent point to 3 mm long. Umbels crowded, distributed along from near base of flower spike peduncle; umbellules crowded, on slender rays to 1 cm long. Fruit of two mericarps; mericarps narrow to elliptic, (7.0-)8.0-12.0 mm, with 3-4(-5) even narrowly winged ribs, other ribs not evident, vittae evident as dark ribs between wings or largely obscured

Threats:

Not Threatened

*Attribution:

Description adapted from Allan (1961), Mark Adams (1995) and Webb, C.J. & Simpson (2001).

References and further reading:

Alla, H. H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume 1: Indigenous Tracheophyta - Psilopsida, Lycopsida, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledons. Botany Division, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. Wellington, New Zealand.

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

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1452



Caption: Mount Holdsworth
Photographer: John Sawyer



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