



Stuckenia pectinata

Common Name(s):

fennel-leaved pondweed, sago pondweed

Current Threat Status (2012):

Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Indigenous to New Zealand where it has been collected from the North, South and Chatham Islands. A cosmopolitan species known from throughout the world. No critical study on its worldwide variation seems to have been done.

Habitat:

Usually in brackish water, such as in slow moving tidal streams or lagoons, but also found in shallow lowland pools.

Features*:

Aquatic rhizomatous herb. Rhizomes forming extensive networks in soft sediment, forming swollen bulb-like buds in autumn. Branches numerous, slender, delicate (rather brittle), 0.1-3 m or more long. Stipulate, with stipules fused to leaf base, forming a sheathing ligulate stem for 10-40 mm, the free portion (ligule) membranous, 5 mm long. Leaves all submersed, 50-120 x 1 mm, dark green to brown-green, entire, narrow-linear (with transverse veins visible), tapering to an acute, membranous tip. Peduncles slender, of varying length. Inflorescence a discontinuous brown spike 20-40 mm, with the lower flower clusters (whorls) well separated. Fruit, an achene 3 x 2.5 mm, light pinkish brown, turgid and rounded, without keel or beak.

Flowering:

January - February

Fruiting:

January - March

Threats:

Probably more overlooked than actually threatened. Nevertheless there is some evidence that this species has declined for sites where it was formerly common over the least 20 or so years, and it remains absent from large stretches of apparently suitable habitat where it was once known 100 or more years ago. The main threat seems to be wetland modification and or drainage, particularly of those brackish wetland systems, or where streams and rivers enter the sea. However, the species can survive some modification and has even been collected in recently established channels, and within pools of water on the floor of gravel quarries. Thus this species may prove to be naturally uncommon rather than genuinely declining. Further field survey is needed to clarify its exact status.

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (January 2006). Description adapted from Moore & Edgar (1970)

References and further reading:

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

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=195



Caption: Close up of fennel-leaved pondweed

Photographer: Rohan Wells



Caption: Fennel-leaved pondweed

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