



Carex cremnicola

Common Name(s):

sedge

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island. North-West Nelson from Takaka Hill southward to the northern slopes of Mt Arthur

Habitat:

Lowland to alpine on marble and derived substrates. *Carex cremnicola* is commonly found in open forest and shrubland growing in cracks, clefts, and hollows in karst terrain, at the bases of cliffs, on ledges, and in cracks of sinkhole walls. On Mt Arthur *C. cremnicola* reaches the penialpine zone and can be found in low shrubland in karst terrain and occasionally in rubble in tussock grassland.

Features*:

Perennial herb, caespitose, tufts rigid, erect to spreading, often surrounded by persistent dead leaves. Culms 130–1280 × 1.0–2.5 mm, spreading, trigonous, edges smooth, sometimes faintly scabrid on one edge becoming harsher distally, longer than leaves when mature. Leaves 145–795 × 2.0–6.0 mm; leaf sheaths brown, nerves distinct; leaf blades weakly double-folded or channelled, yellow-green to green; leaf margins harshly scabrid; keel and adaxial secondary veins scabrid towards apex; apex trigonous, scabrid, acuminate. Inflorescence of (3–)4–7(–8) male, androgynous, and female spikes; spikes usually borne singly at nodes, occasionally female and male spikes compound; spikes terminally congested, sessile and erect, becoming more distant, peduncled and drooping below (in high altitude plants sometimes all sessile and erect); male spikes 12–86 × 1.0–3.0 mm, linear or clavate, cylindrical, brown, forming a congested terminal cluster of 2–5 spikes, including often small male spikes subtending larger male spikes; usually 1 or 2 androgynous spikes below the terminal male cluster; remaining lower spikes female 8.0–70 × 1.5–6.0 mm, oblong, occasionally clavate, cylindrical, red-brown. Lowermost inflorescence bract leaf-like (62–)200–450(–530) × 1.5–5.0 mm, longer than inflorescence. Male glumes 3.12–5.12 × 1.08–2.2 mm, red to red-brown, obovate-oblong, concavo-convex, subcoriaceous, mid-region 3-veined, green fading to white at maturity; margins membranous, but scabrid towards apex; apex entire or emarginate with a scabrid awn. Female glumes 2.0–4.3 × 0.9–1.8 mm, those with awns longer than or subequal to utricles (those without awns usually shorter than utricles), red-brown (flecked), ovate, concavo-convex, subcoriaceous, mid-region 3-veined, green fading to white; margins membranous but scabrid near apex; apex entire or emarginate with a prominent scabrid awn up to 1.2 mm long. Stamens 3, anthers 2.2–3.5 mm long. Utricles 2.0–3.5 × 0.8–2.0 mm, spreading at maturity, ovoid, elliptic or sometimes fusiform, trigonous, red to black above and white to yellow below, nerved on both abaxial and adaxial surfaces; stipe pale, tapered; beak prominent 0.3–1.0 mm long, narrowing to a bidentate apex with long scabrid crura; orifice scabrid and weakly oblique. Stigmas 3, 1.8–3.6 mm long. Achenes 1.0–2.0 × 0.8–1.3 mm, obovate or angled-obovate, trigonous, brown.

Flowering:

November

Fruiting:

January - March

Threats:

Not Threatened - but biologically sparse over its entire range. Previously regarded (as *Carex* (a) (CHR 395744; Takaka)) as Sparse in de Lange et al., 2004, Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand, New Zealand Journal of Botany 42: 45-76.

*Attribution:

Fact Sheet by P.J. de Lange (1 January 2008). Description based on Ford (2007)

References and further reading:

Ford, K.A. 2007: *Carex* (Cyperaceae) - two new species from the calcareous mountains of North-West Nelson, New Zealand. New Zealand Journal of Botany 45: 721-730.

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

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