



Carex muelleri

Common Name(s):

Muellers Sedge

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Endemic. South Island, in the east from Marlborough (upper Wairau River) to Otago.

Habitat:

A species of upper montane river flat, lake margin and shallow tarn habitats within tussock grassland. It seems to prefer seasonally wet habitats.

Features*:

Rhizomatous; pale yellow-green, whitish-green to green tufted and swarding sedge. Rhizome 2-3 mm diameter, rather woody, covered in closely sheathing brown scales. Culms stiffly erect, 60-450 x 0.5-1 mm, > leaves, terete, flattened or plano-convex above, terete below, rather wiry, glabrous; basal sheaths dark grey-brown or reddish brown. Leaves 80-350 x 0.5-15 mm, plano-convex or with the upper surface slightly concave, lamina grooved along back, flattened near tip, occasionally scabrid along the margins. Inflorescences almost dioecious, with plants either mostly male or female; males with sparse female flowers near inflorescence apex, females with males in the same position. Inflorescence an erect, linear, continuous, compound spike 15-40 x 4 mm. Spikes 5-10, more or less contiguous, pale, straw-coloured to almost grey-green. Subtending bracts glume-like, rather long-awned, though not > inflorescence. Glumes more or less the same length as the utricles, linear-lanceolate, acuminate or awned, rather membranous to chartaceous, pale green to pale brown or hyaline. Utricles 3.5-4.5 x 1-1.2 mm, plano-convex, narrow-lanceolate, strongly nerved on the flat face; beak 1.5-2 mm long, tapering, with finely scabrid wings and an oblique, bifid orifice; stipe 0.5-1 mm, hardly contracted. Stigmas 2. Nut c.2 mm long, brown, oblong-obovoid, smooth, glossy.

Flowering:

October - January

Fruiting:

October - June

Threats:

A biologically sparse, naturally uncommon species. In some parts of its range it may be declining due to competition from weeds.

*Attribution:

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=237



Caption: Nevis Valley, Otago

Photographer: John Barkla



Caption: Carex muelleri

Photographer: John Barkla