



Carex albula

Common Name(s):

White Sedge

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Declining

Distribution:

Endemic. South Island in a narrow area from the Mackenzie Basin, Waitaki and Central Otago

Habitat:

A species of mainly alluvial terraces, colluvial slopes and river flats. It prefers free draining soils and is often a local component of grey scrub communities. Seemingly unpalatable it often persists in paddocks alongside cattle and sheep.

Features*:

Stiffly erect to drooping, buff-coloured to almost bleached white, green or red, densely caespitose sedge, 250-350 mm tall. Culms 50-200 x 0.5 mm smooth, often with a deep groove; basal sheaths dark brown to purple-red. Leaves numerous, much > culms, 0.8-0.9(-1) mm wide, plano-convex, rigid, grooved, margins scabrid. Spikes 3-6(-8); terminal spike male; remaining spikes female, 5-20 x 3-5 mm, distant, upper spikes sessile to sub-sessile, lower spikes narrower, flattened, with scabrid peduncles. Glumes (excluding awn) slightly < utricle length, broadly ovate, acute, pale cream with a few to many scattered fine brown striae, chartaceous, nerves beside midrib usually indistinct, awn long and narrow, finely scabrid. Utricles 2.5-3 x 1.5 mm, plano-convex to subtrigonal, elliptic-ovoid, pale brown, nerved on the convex face towards margin; beak 0.5 mm, deeply bidentate with spreading crura, margins and crura scabrid. Stigmas 3. Nut 1.5 mm, light grey-brown, trigonal, oblong-ovoid.

Flowering:

October - December

Fruiting:

October - September

Threats:

A local regional endemic. Though it does not seem to be particularly palatable as it is often found in some abundance within pasture otherwise heavily cropped by sheep and/or cattle, plants have been lost to spraying and cultivation. It also does not seem to tolerate competition from taller species

***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:

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