



Carex decurtata

Common Name(s):

Sedge

Current Threat Status (2012):

Data Deficient

Distribution:

Endemic. South Island from Canterbury to Otago, mainly known from the Mackenzie Basin (particularly from Lakes Tekapo, Pukaki and nearby tarns).

Habitat:

A plant of lake, tarn margins and river sides, preferring open stony ground or situations with little surrounding vegetation. Tolerant of long period of water immersion.

Features*:

Densely tufted bright green, bronze green to yellow-green, diminutive sedge of river terraces, lake and wetland margins. Culms 20-70 mm long, enclosed by light to dark brown leaf-sheaths almost to their apex. Leaves much longer than culms, 30-90 x 0.5-1 mm, almost flat bright green, bronze green to yellow-green, concavo-convex, almost flat, linear, rather rigid and coriaceous, margins scabrid, gradually tapering to a subacute apex, incurved when dry; sheaths twice as broad as lamina, pale brown with chartaceous to membranous margins. Inflorescence a crowded head of 3-5 spikes. Terminal spike male; lower spikes female, 4-8 mm long, ovoid or oblong-ovoid, greenish-brown, sessile or the lowermost rather shortly pedunculate; spikes subtended by leaf-like bracts which are longer than the inflorescence. Glumes less than or of equal length to the utricles, ovate to orbicular, acute or with the midrib extended into a long scabrid awn, nerved, membranous, red-brown with a pale centre and margin, or pale straw-coloured. Utricles 2.5-3 x 1.5 mm, plano-convex to subtrigonal, broadly ovoid, light brown, turgid at the back, faintly nerved, spreading, margins thickened and serrated toward apex, beak 0.5 mm long, scabrid, crura acutely cleft, scabrid; stipe absent although utricles narrow towards base (a pseudostipe). Stigmas 3. Nut 2 mm long, grey-brown, trigonal.

Flowering:

October - January

Fruiting:

October - July

Threats:

A naturally uncommon species largely confined to the intermontane basins of Canterbury and Otago. In some places it is now at risk from canalisation, dairy farming (irrigation mainly) and the resultant influx of weed species. Its conservation status may require reassessment.

*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=391



Photographer: John Barkla



Caption: Pisa Flats

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