Carex pterocarpa

Common Name(s):

Sedge

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. South Island, Old Man Range (South Canterbury), Central Otago (Dunstan, Rock & Pillar and other nearby ranges).

Habitat:

An alpine species associated with open fell field, cushion bog, and windswept, moist and stable rock or gravel pavements.

Caption: Carex pterocarpa
Photographer: John Barkla

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Features*:

Short, squat, tufted, rather coarse-leaved sedge. Rhizome short, 2 mm diameter, woody, covered by fibrous leaf and leaf-sheath remnants. Culms 20-50 mm tall, much less than leaves in length, and almost hidden by leaf-sheaths, triquetrous, scabrid; basal sheaths grey-brown or chestnut. Leaves 20-60 x 1-3 mm, somewhat distichously arranged, channelled, coriaceous, margins and keel minutely though harshly scabrid, tapering to an ± acute apex; sheaths dull brown, membranous ± or equal lamina in length. Inflorescence an ovate, triangular, 7 x 7 mm, brownish head comprised of 2-4 congested spikes, the lowermost sometimes subtended by a leaf-like bract. Spikes 4-6 mm long, male flowers at top of spike, rarely at base. Glumes ± or equal utricle length, ovate, acute, membranous, midrib short, thick set, green, keel of lowermost glumes often rather scabrid. Utricles 3 x 2 mm, plano-convex, elliptic-ovoid, ± papillose, nerved, dark brown with pale brown conspicuous wings, margins strongly scabrid; beak narrow, 0.7-0.9 mm, crura bifid, oblique; stipe minute. Stigmas 2. Nut 1.5 mm, brown, biconvex, smooth, styles persistent.

Flowering:

November - January

Fruiting:

November - August

Threats:

Not threatened. A naturally uncommon species of mainly high altitude schist mountains.

***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

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