



Simplicia buchananii

Common Name(s):

Simplicia

Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Critical

Distribution:

Endemic to New Zealand. Known from three sites in the southern North Island near Taihape, and from North West Nelson, in the South Island. Plants from the North Island are somewhat intermediate between *S. buchananii* and *S. laxa* and require further study.

Habitat:

Exact preferences unclear, though a preference for base-rich substrates and semi-shaded situations in forest or near rock overhangs is evident. In the South Island it has usually been collected on or near limestone or marble outcrops in lowland to montane forest. The recently (2005) discovered North Island site differs somewhat in that plants grow in and around the bases of titoki (*Alectryon excelsus* Gaertn. subsp. *excelsus*) trees on river terraces. However, even here the underlying substrate is calcareous mudstones and siltstones

Features*:

Weakly erect to scrambling or loosely tufted, slender grass forming patches up to 1 m across and 0.5 m tall. Leaf-sheath membranous, strongly ribbed, mostly scabrid on ribs; basal sheaths dark brown, pubescent, upper sheaths glabrous or pubescent. Ligule 2-4 mm, erose, undersides glabrous. Leaf-blade 100.0-200.0 x 1.5-4.0 mm, smooth or finely scabrid on ribs; margins finely scabrid, apex acuminate. Culm internodes glabrescent or finely pubescent. Panicle 40-180 mm long, ± linear (in north-west Nelson, often sparingly branched or pyramidal in North Island); rachis glabrous, branches short or long, mostly erect, basal 1 or 2 sometimes reflexed, sometimes basal branches widely spreading; glabrous, bearing spikelets almost to base, pedicels short, glabrous, ± appressed to branchlets. Spikelets 2.8-3.0 mm, 1(-2)-flowered, lanceolate, light green. Glumes glabrous, ovate-lanceolate to ovate, acute to subacute, margins ciliate; lower 0.7-1.0 mm, upper 1.0-1.5 mm. Lemma mostly equivalent in length to spikelet, scabrid or shortly pubescent, 3-nerved or with 2 additional fainter lateral nerves, ovate-lanceolate, acute to mucronate, or with a subapical awnlet. Palea 2.3-2.7 mm, 1-2-nerved, scabrid. Rachilla prolongation 0.5 mm long, glabrous. Anthers 0.7-1.3 mm long, purplish or yellow. Seed 1.5 mm long.

Flowering:

(September-) November (-February)

Fruiting:

(October-) January (-May)

Threats:

A local endemic which can apparently be locally common but most sites are very small. However, only one South Island population is currently known and the status of other populations in NW Nelson needs examination.

*Attribution:

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (27 October 2009). Description adapted from Zotov 1971.

References and further reading:

Zotov, V. D. 1971. *Simplicia* T. Kirk (Gramineae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 9: 539-544.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=685



Caption: Close up - ex. Honeycomb Cave

Photographer: Peter de Lange