

# Carex of Northeastern Illinois and Northwestern Indiana, USA

## 2 Sedges (*Carex* spp.) of the Chicago Region

WEB VERSION

Volunteer Stewardship Network – Chicago Wilderness

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**Group 3.  
LARGE-  
HEADED  
SEDGES:**  
Some spikes wholly female; often pedunculate spikes; perigynia > 1 cm long.

**14** *C. pellita*  
BROAD-LEAVED WOOLLY SEDGE: bases fibrillose; lower leaf sheaths commonly yellowish-brown in the inner face. Common in wet prairies.

**15** *C. pensylvanica* **16** *C. pensylvanica* **17** *C. pensylvanica*  
COMMON OAK SEDGE: narrow dead leaves typically abundant around the red, fibrous bases; rhizomes slender, elongate; perigynia few per spike, pubescent. This is one of our first sedges to bloom, the first perigynia falling when most *Carex* species are just becoming identifiable. Dry to mesic, frequently sunny, woods, ranging to sandy prairies.



**Group 4.  
BEAKED  
BOTTLEBRUSH  
SEDGES:**  
Some spikes wholly female; often pedunculate spikes; perigynia < 1cm long.



**18** *C. grayi*  
COMMON BURR SEDGE: spikes large, spherical, mace-like appearance; perigynia large, dull or hairy. Wet woods.

**19** *C. lupulina*  
COMMON HOP SEDGE: pistillate “caterpillar” spikes longer than wide, with up to 80 perigynia; perigynia swollen, bladder-like, resembling *C. grayi* and *C. intumescens*. Wet woods.

**20** *C. comosa* **21** *C. comosa*  
BRISTLY SEDGE: plants often forming large clumps; spikes borne on drooping stalks, plump; perigynium beak teeth spreading or outcurved, 1-2 mm long. Open wetlands, often in standing water.



**22** *C. hystericina* **23** *C. hystericina* **24** *C. hystericina*  
PORCUPINE SEDGE: bristly inflorescences, composed of 1 cm thick cylindrical spikes, make this common plant distinctive; because of the densely packed, slightly inflated perigynia, the scabrous awn is the only part of the pistillate scale visible; shoot bases reddish to purple, slightly fibrillose; beaks about 2 mm long, tipped by very short straight teeth. Calcareous wetlands.

**25** *C. lacustris* **26** *C. lacustris*  
COMMON LAKE SEDGE: plants often forming large clones with few inflorescences; bases thick, spongy, clothed in dead leaves from previous year; ligule hyaline and shaped as a long, inverted “V”;

continued...