

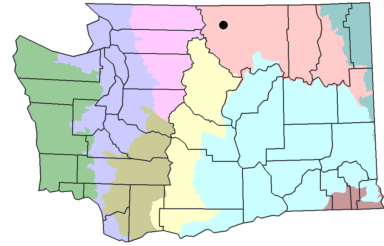
Carex chordorrhiza Ehrh. ex L. f.

cordroot sedge

Cyperaceae - sedge family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S1



General Description: Hairless perennial with short rhizomes and prostrate stolons that elongate with age, reaching up to 12 dm long. Stems 1 to several, 3-angled, 5-35 cm tall, arising from stolons. Leaves at the base of fertile stems are narrow, up to 4 dm long. Nonflowering stems usually have longer, more abundant leaves.

Floral Characteristics: Flowers borne in 3-8 small aggregate spikes at stem tips; lateral spikes are sessile. Spikes 4-8 x 2-5 mm, androgynous, with 1-5 female flowers below. Perigynia many-veined on both surfaces, hairless, egg-shaped, dark brown, 2-4 (4.5) x 1.4-2.2 mm, tip irregularly toothed to weakly 2-toothed, glossy. Beak 0.3-0.6 mm, less than 1/5 the length of the perigynium body. Scales subtending the female flowers broadly egg-shaped, brownish with green centers and paler margins, and generally the same length as the perigynia. Stigmas 2. Flowers June to July.

Fruits: Achenes lens-shaped, silvery brown, smooth; style deciduous.

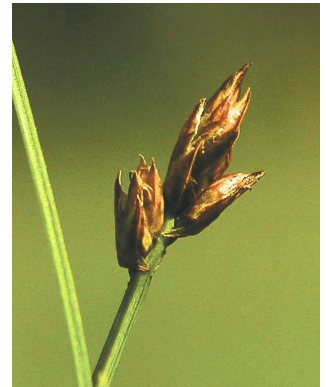
Identification Tips: This species is not in Hitchcock & Cronquist (1973). The long stolons of *C. chordorrhiza* eventually become overgrown with moss and appear rhizome-like. The strict peatland habitat and small heads help to distinguish the species.

Range: Circumboreal: Eurasia, Greenland, AK, throughout Canada, southward to OR, ID, MT, IA, IL, and PA.

Habitat/Ecology: Wetlands, peatlands, sphagnum bogs and lakeshores; boreal and subarctic regions at low to middle altitudes. *C. chordorrhiza* is a component of transition mires such as mesotrophic peatlands (poor fens). The only population known in WA occurs in an ecologically unique fen at 1380 m (4520 ft). Associates include western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*), willow (*Salix* spp.), sedges (*Carex* spp.), mosses, and buckbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*).

Comments: Threats include livestock grazing, hydrologic alteration, and timber harvesting. While the OR populations are thought to be introduced from the midwest, the WA population is considered a wild, native genotype. This taxon is rare in ID, MT, ND, IA, IL, IN, and several eastern states and Canadian provinces.

References: Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 23; Taylor 1983; Zika 2003.



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