

Carex heteroneura* W. Boott var. *epapillosa

(Mack.) F.J. Herm.

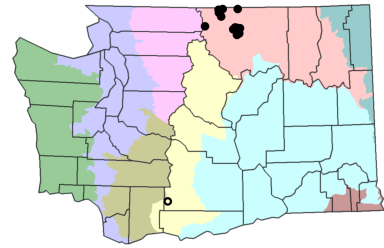
synonym: *Carex atrata* L. var. *erecta* W. Boott, *Carex epapillosa* Mack.

smooth-fruit sedge

Cyperaceae - sedge family

status: State Sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5TNR / S2



General Description: Adapted from Flora of North America (1993+) and Wilson et al. (2008): Densely tufted perennial sedge with stems 25-60 (100) cm tall. Leaf blades 2-6 mm wide.

Floral Characteristics: Inflorescence drooping with maturity. Spikes 3-6 (8), spreading to erect, 1-2.5 cm x 6-8 mm, the lowest one sometimes distant from the others and pendant. Lateral spikes female; terminal spike with female flowers above and a few male flowers below. Female scales light to dark brown or purplish black, lanceolate, tips pointed, margins white-translucent; midvein inconspicuous, usually the same color as the scale body or sometimes paler. Perigynia light to dark brown with pale brown margins, obovate to circular, veinless, 3.5-4 x 2-3 mm, abruptly beaked; beak 0.3-0.5 mm, bidentate. Stigmas 2-3.

Fruits: Achenes 3-angled, filling half or less of the perigynium. Identifiable July to September.

Identification Tips: *Carex heteroneura* var. *heteroneura** is not known from WA; it is distinguished by light green or yellowish (sometimes light brown) perigynia and dark female scales with a strongly differentiated, pale midrib. *C. atosquama** is distinguished by female scales that are ovate to broadly lanceolate, with blunt tips, and pale green to dark golden perigynia. *C. albonigra* has achenes that nearly fill the perigynia. *C. mertensii* has drooping spikes 1-4 cm long.

Range: B.C. east to Sask., south to CA and AZ.

Habitat/Ecology: Stream and lake margins, seeps, and moist to mesic meadows of subalpine and alpine areas; sometimes on steep rocky or gravelly slopes. Associated species include Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), varileaf cinquefoil (*Potentilla diversifolia*), sedges (*Carex* spp.), Sitka valerian (*Valeriana sitchensis*), alpine timothy (*Phleum alpinum*), pinegrass (*Calamagrostis rubescens*), American globeflower (*Trollius laxus*) and marsh-marigold (*Caltha leptosepala*). Elevations in WA: 1615-2400 m (5300-7900 ft).

Comments: This taxon is also rare in B.C. and Alberta.

References: Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 23; Wilson et al. 2008.



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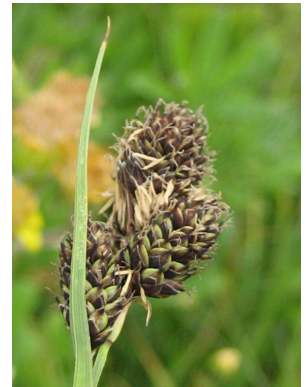


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