

**Carex media** R. Br. ex Richardson

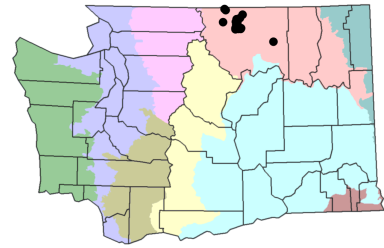
synonym: *Carex norvegica* Retz.

intermediate sedge

Cyperaceae - sedge family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S2



**General Description:** Adapted from Flora of North America (1993+): Clustered perennial with stems 15-50 (70) cm tall, rough-textured toward the top. Leaves 2-4 mm wide.

**Floral Characteristics:** Lower bracts shorter than or exceeding the inflorescences. Lateral 1-2 (4) spikes female, the lower ones erect, on short peduncles. Terminal spike gynaeandrous. Upper spikes sessile, overlapping, forming a dense terminal cluster, spherical or oblong, 5-12 x 3-6 mm. Female scales dark brown or black, sometimes translucent near top, shorter than the perigynia, midvein inconspicuous. Perigynia erect, spreading or sometimes reflexed, pale green, becoming golden brown, veinless or few-veined, ovate, 2.5-3.5 mm, smooth or papillose, sometimes finely serrate toward the tip. Beak 0.3-0.4 mm long, with 2 shallow teeth. Stigmas 2-3.



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**Fruits:** Achenes 3-angled, nearly filling the body of perigynium. Fruits July to August.

**Identification Tips:** *Carex parryana* has longer spikes (5-20 mm) than *C. media*, 1 or more lateral spikes that are as long as the terminal spike, and female scales that are light to dark brown (not black), with a lightly colored, prominent midvein. Unlike *C. media*, *C. parryana* grows at low to middle elevations.

**Range:** Circumboreal: Eurasia, Greenland, AK, throughout Canada, and southward to WA, OR, MT, IA, WI, MI, and ME.

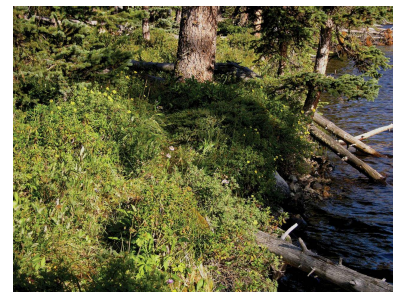
**Habitat/Ecology:** Moist meadows and perennial streams and ponds. Elevations in WA: 1500-2170 m (4900-7120 ft). Associated species include Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), willows (*Salix* spp.), western Labrador tea (*Ledum glandulosum*), prickly currant (*Ribes lacustre*), sedges (*Carex* spp., including *Carex disperma* and *C. scopulorum* var. *prionophylla*), sphagnum moss (*Sphagnum* spp.), single delight (*Moneses uniflora*), and bunchberry dogwood (*Cornus unalaschkensis*).

**Comments:** Current threats include cattle grazing and trampling from recreational use. This taxon is also rare in OR, IA, WI, MI, ME, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Quebec.

**References:** Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 23.



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the Sedges of the Pacific Northwest  
(Oregon State University Press,  
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