

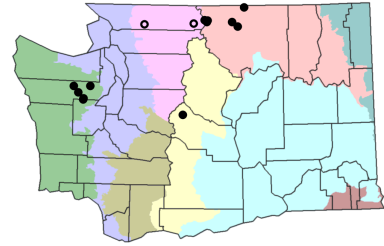
## ***Carex scirpoidea* Michx. ssp. *scirpoidea***

Canadian single-spike sedge

Cyperaceae - sedge family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5T5 / S2



**General Description:** Tufted perennial with short rhizomes and erect stems (5) 10-35 (40) cm tall. Leaf blades widely V-shaped in cross section, 31 cm x 2.5 mm; sheaths and leaf bases from previous year's leaves absent.

**Floral Characteristics:** Spike usually solitary, unisexual, with male and female spikes usually on separate plants. Scales reddish brown to purple, ovate, 2.5 x 1.5 mm. Perigynia with white hairs on the upper 3/4, ovate, (1.8) 2-2.5 (3) x 1-1.2 (1.5) mm, body tightly enveloping achene. Stigmas (2) 3 (4). Flowers June to August.

**Fruits:** Achenes usually 3-angled, 1.5-1.8 x 0.8-1.2 mm.

**Identification Tips:** *C. scirpoidea* ssp. *scirpoidea* is the common form over most of its range, but gives way to ssp. *stenochlaena* and ssp. *pseudoscirpoidea* within their respective ranges. Subspecies *stenochlaena* is common in WA; it has relatively long, narrow perigynia, greater than 2 times as long as wide, and lax stems. Subspecies *pseudoscirpoidea* is not tufted, has long rhizomes, and has persistent sheaths and bases from the previous year's leaves. In contrast, ssp. *scirpoidea* is tufted, has short rhizomes, and is distinctly aphyllopodic.

**Range:** Circumboreal: Europe, eastern Asia, Canada, extending south in the Sierras and Rockies to NV, UT, CO, and east to MN, MI, and the northeastern U.S.

**Habitat/Ecology:** Moist alpine meadows, stream banks, and open rocky slopes in the mountains, often above timberline. It prefers thin and rocky soils, rock outcrops, and talus slopes; it is generally surrounded by boulders, ridges, snowfields, and scree. Elevations in WA: 1460-2320 m (4800-7600 ft). This subspecies is usually found in moister habitats and sometimes at lower elevations than *Carex scirpoidea* ssp. *pseudoscirpoidea*.

**Comments:** The WA populations are at the southern edge of the species' range. Livestock grazing and herbicides are potential threats. This taxon may have been extirpated from New Brunswick and is rare in ME, MI, NH, NY, WY, and Nova Scotia.

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



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