

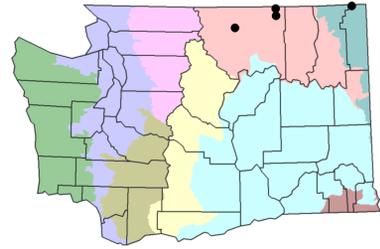
***Carex capillaris* L.**

hair-like sedge

Cyperaceae - sedge family

status: State Threatened, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S1



General Description: Perennial with stems densely tufted, slender, and lax, 1-6 dm tall, with the lowest leaves well developed. Leaves mostly in a basal cluster, generally much shorter than the stems, up to 15 cm x 1-3 mm.

Floral Characteristics: Terminal spikes usually male, 4-10 mm long. Lateral spikes 1-4, usually remote, on lax, thin, nodding or loosely spreading peduncles, with 5-25 flowers, 0.5-1.5 cm long, sometimes compound. Female spikes all subtended by sheathing bracts. Scales of female flowers shorter but often wider than the perigynia, white to translucent at tips and margins, otherwise light brown or greenish, eventually deciduous. Perigynia elliptic or lance-ovate, 2.4-3.3 mm long, 2-nerved, not much if at all compressed, loosely enclosing the achene and empty above, hairless or faintly roughened toward the beak, shining brown to olive green. Beak short, poorly defined, translucent-tipped. Stigmas 3; styles deciduous.

Fruits: Achenes 3-angled when viewed from the top, obovoid when viewed from the side, 1.2-1.7 mm long, jointed to the style. Identifiable June to August.

Identification Tips: The densely tufted growth form, slender stems, more than 1 spike per stem, spikes nodding or spreading, and hairless perigynia are useful characters.

Range: Circumboreal: northern Eurasia, throughout Canada, AK, south to northeastern OR, NV, UT, NM, SD, MI, and NY.

Habitat/Ecology: Stream banks, wet meadows, bogs, and marshy lakeshores, often on calcareous substrates. Elevations in WA: 850-1980 m (2800-6500 ft). Associated species include resin birch (*Betula glandulosa*), western Labrador tea (*Ledum glandulosum*), shrubby cinquefoil (*Dasiphora fruticosa* ssp. *floribunda*), rushes (*Juncus* spp.), sedges (*Carex* spp.), and mountain death-camas (*Zigadenus elegans*). As a facultative wetland species, *C. capillaris* is generally found in wetlands, but occasionally occurs in drier areas.

Comments: Threats include significant hydrologic change, timber harvesting, and recreation (camping and fishing). This species is rare in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, OR, and several other states.

References: Cronquist et al. 1972-94, vol. 6.



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