

CAREX EBURNEA
EBONY SEDGE
Family: CYPERACEAE

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.
Agency Status: None.

Heritage Rank:

Global: G5 State: S1
WYNDD Plant List: Peripheral (Low
Conservation Priority)

Description: Ebony sedge is a tufted or short-rhizomatous perennial graminoid with slender stems 10-30 cm tall. Leaves are involute, less than 0.5 mm wide, and shorter than the flowering stems. The inflorescence is subtended by a bladeless sheath. The terminal spike is staminate, nearly sessile, and 4-8 mm long. Pistillate lateral spikes are 3-6 mm long, contain 2-6 flowers, and are borne on long erect stalks that surpass the terminal spike. Pistillate scales are broadly ovate with obtuse to acute tips that are shorter than the perigynium and are whitish with narrow green midveins. Perigynia are 1.5-2 mm long, glabrous, green to brown, finely nerved, and have a beak under 0.2 mm long. Pistillate flowers have 3 styles and trigonous achenes (Gleason and Cronquist 1991; Great Plains Flora Association 1986).

Identification Comments: Few-flowered spikes, pistillate flowers with 3 styles, and slender leaves (under 0.5 mm wide) are diagnostic.

Similar Species: *Carex richardsonii* has long-stalked terminal staminate spikes, pubescent perigynia, and leaves 1.5-2.5 mm

wide. *C. concinna* has pubescent perigynia and leaves over 1 mm wide.

Flowering/Fruiting Period: June-July.

Distribution: Ranges from Newfoundland to Alaska south to Virginia, Alabama, Texas, Wyoming, and Montana. In Wyoming, known only from the Black Hills in Crook County.

Habitat: Reported from "primarily wooded areas, but occasionally in adjacent prairies" and on "calcareous soil" (Great Plains Flora Association 1986; Gleason and Cronquist 1991). Populations in Wyoming are found on south and west-facing slopes with sandstone and limestone outcrops in Ponderosa pine and Bur oak communities at 4000 feet elevation.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from a single population in Wyoming, last observed in 1983.

Abundance: Not known, but presumed low due to small area of occupied habitat.

Trends: Not known.

Protection status: The single known population in the state occurs on private lands. Potential habitat may exist in the Dugout Gulch Special Botanical Area.

Threats: May be threatened by loss of habitat due to logging or recreation.

Managed Areas: None.

References:

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