

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

CAREX SCIRPOIDEA
VAR. *SCIRPIFORMIS*
CANADIAN SINGLE-SPIKE SEDGE
Family: Cyperaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.

Agency Status: None.

Heritage Rank:

Global: G5T4Q State: S1

WYNDD Plant List: Peripheral (Low
conservation priority)

Description: Canadian single-spike sedge is a tufted perennial with stems 20-45 cm high. The stems originate from vegetative shoots of the current year and have scaly bases that are not hidden by dried, tattered leaves remaining from the previous year. Each stem has 2-6 somewhat channeled leaves that are 2-3 mm wide. Spikes are solitary, erect, and unisexual. Pistillate spikes are linear, 2-4 cm long, 4-5 mm wide, and have 30-80 flowers. Perigynia are oblong-ovoid, obscurely 3-sided, greenish to yellowish brown, abruptly contracted to a 2-toothed beak, and stiffly short-pubescent. The pubescent pistillate and staminate flowering scales are purplish-black with a lighter center stripe and broad white-hyaline margins (nearly 1/2 width of the scale). Achenes are sharply trigonous, brownish-yellow, and short-stalked (Hermann 1970; Fertig and Jones 1992; Dorn 1992; Fertig 1998).

Synonyms: Included in *Carex scirpoidea* ssp. *scirpoidea* by Dunlop and Crow (1999).

Similar Species: *Carex scirpoidea* var. *scirpoidea* has flowering bracts with more narrowly hyaline margins (white

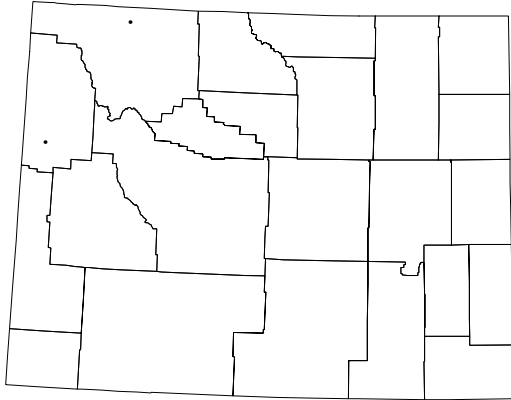


Above: *Carex scirpoidea* var. *scirpiformis* from Hermann (1970).

membranous edge is only 1/4 or less the width of the bract). *Carex parryana* vars. *parryana* and *unica* have glabrous perigynia with minutely-toothed margins and flowering bracts with green midribs (Dorn 1992; Fertig 1998).

Flowering/Fruiting Period: June-August.

Distribution: Occurs from Manitoba to Alberta and south to North Dakota, northern Wyoming, and Utah (Hermann 1970). In Wyoming, known from the Northern Absaroka Range and Jackson Hole.



Above: Wyoming distribution of *C. scirpoidea* var. *scirpiformis*.

Habitat: Occurs in open, sunny sites, often at the edge of wet meadows, on calcareous substrates (Hermann 1970). At Swamp Lake, it has been observed on semi-moist hummocks in marly *Triglochin-Eleocharis* communities and on floating mats of *Carex simulata/Calamagrostis inexpansa* (Fertig and Jones 1992). Populations on the National Elk Refuge are mostly on exposures of dry to moist marl-clay near seep springs and dried stream channels.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from 2 occurrences in Wyoming, both observed since 1992.

Abundance: Census data are lacking, but known populations appear to be restricted to small areas (ca 5-10 acres or less) and specialized microhabitats.

Trends: Not known.

Protection Status: Both known occurrences are within special management areas:

Swamp Lake SBA and the National Elk Refuge.

Threats: May be impacted by changes in water levels in its wetland habitat.

Managed Areas: Occurs on lands managed by Shoshone National Forest and the National Elk Refuge (US Fish and Wildlife Service).

References:

Dorn, R.D. 1992. Vascular Plants of Wyoming, second edition. Mountain West Publishing, Cheyenne, WY.

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Fertig, W. 1998. Plant species of special concern and vascular plant flora of the National Elk Refuge. Unpublished report prepared for the US Fish and Wildlife Service by the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, Laramie, WY.

Fertig, W. 1998. The status of rare plants on Shoshone National Forest: 1995-97 survey results. Report prepared by the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, Laramie, WY.

Fertig, W. and G. Jones. 1992. Plant communities and rare plants of the Swamp Lake Botanical Area, Clarks Fork Ranger District, Shoshone National Forest. Unpublished report prepared for the Shoshone National Forest by the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database.

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