



Maine Department of Conservation
Natural Areas Program

Carex tenuiflora Wahlenb.

Sparse-flowered Sedge

Habitat: Bogs and mossy woods or pond margins, usually higher pH. [Forested wetland; Open wetland, not coastal nor rivershore (non-forested, wetland)]

Range: Newfoundland to Alaska, south to Maine, New York, and west to Alberta. In New England, this species has only been documented from Maine to Vermont.

Phenology: Fruits June - August.

Family: Cyperaceae

Aids to Identification: Identification of species of the genus *Carex* is usually difficult and dependent upon rather technical characters. *C. tenuiflora* is in the section *Glarosae*. This section is characterized by gynecandrous spikes, cespitose habit, and short perigynia. This species is distinguished by the presence of 2-4 congested spikes bearing white hyaline floral scales.



Illustration from Britton & Brown's Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada, 2nd ed.

Ecological characteristics: In Maine peatlands, this sedge is found in both forested and open peatlands, usually in circumneutral fen communities.

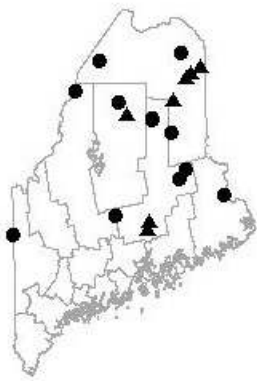
Synonyms:

Rarity of *Carex tenuiflora*

State Rank:	S3	Rare in Maine.
New England Rank:	Division 2	Regionally rare plant: Fewer than 20 current (seen since 1970) occurrences within New England.
Global Rank:	G5	Demonstrably widespread, abundant, and secure globally.

Status of *Carex tenuiflora*

Federal Status:	None	No Federal Status.
State Status:	Special Concern	



▲ Historical (before 1983)
● Recent (1983 - present)

Known Distribution in Maine:

This rare plant has been documented from a total of 18 town(s) in the following county(ies): Aroostook, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Washington.

Dates of documented observations are: 1902, 1905, 1940 (2), 1941, 1981, 1982, 1984 (2), 1985, 1987, 1989 (2), 1993, 1996, 1997, 1998 (2), 2003

Reason(s) for rarity:

At southern limit of range.

Conservation considerations:

Maintain the hydrologic integrity of the circumneutral fen habitat. This sedge is most often found in openings, not under dense cedar, and it is likely that canopy openings could favor this species. Complete removal of the canopy over a large area, however, could produce drastic habitat changes that would be detrimental to the plant.

The information in this fact sheet was downloaded from the Natural Areas Program's Biological and Conservation Database on 12 MAY 2004. We are grateful to our Botanical Advisory Group for additional information on particular species, and in particular, to Arthur Haines for his assistance with identifying characteristics and taxonomic questions. Nomenclature follows Haines and Vining's *Flora of Maine* (V.F. Thomas Press, 1998); where older works refer to a plant by another name, it is given under "Synonyms". The Natural Areas Program, within the Department of Conservation, maintains the most comprehensive source of information on Maine's rare or endangered plants and rare or exemplary natural communities, and is a member of the Association for Biodiversity Information.

If you know of locations for this plant or would like more information on this species,
please contact the Natural Areas Program
State House Station 93, Augusta, Maine 04333; telephone (207) 287-8044.

