

***Carex magellanica* Lam. ssp. *irrigua* (Wahlenb.)**

Hiitonen

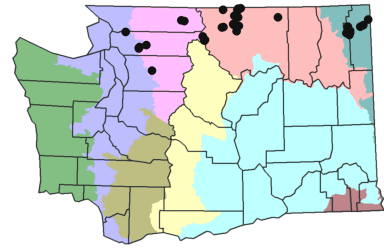
synonym: *Carex paupercula* Michx.

poor sedge

Cyperaceae - sedge family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5T5 / S2S3



**General Description:** Adapted from Flora of North America (1993+): Perennial, rhizomatous sedge; stems loosely clustered, 1-8 dm high, mostly phyllopodic. Roots with yellowish brown felty covering. Leaf blades 1-4 mm wide, margins roughened and rolled downward.

**Floral Characteristics:** Bracts 3-15 cm, equaling or exceeding the inflorescences. Male spike solitary, terminal; occasionally with 1-8 female flowers above the male flowers. Lateral spikes female, usually with 1-3 male flowers at the base, 6-22 x 4-8 mm, with 5-20 perigynia. Female scales lanceolate, longer and narrower than the perigynia, with pointed tips, often with awns up to 3 mm. Perigynia 2.5-3.6 x 1.8-2.5 mm, with rounded tips. Beak of the perigynium absent or up to 0.2 mm. Stigmas 3. Anthers 1.6-2.5 mm.

**Fruits:** Achenes 3-angled, 1.4-1.9 mm, almost as large as the perigynium body. Identifiable June to September.

**Identification Tips:** *Carex limosa* and *C. macrochaeta* also have roots with a yellowish brown feltlike covering. However, *C. limosa* is mostly aphyllopodic, has unawned female scales that are wider than the perigynia, and leaf blade margins inrolled over the upper surface. *C. macrochaeta* (also rare in WA) has perigynia 3.8-6.8 mm, female scale awns up to 12 mm, and anthers 3.3-5 mm.

**Range:** Throughout Eurasia, Canada, Greenland, AK, and parts of the northern U.S.

**Habitat/Ecology:** Fens, bogs, shady wet meadows, shrub wetlands, and marshes; often growing in peat soil. Elevations in WA: 500-2135 m (1640-7000 ft). Associated species include Sitka alder (*Alnus viridis* ssp. *sinuata*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), willows (*Salix* spp.), spirea (*Spiraea douglasii*), bog Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), tall cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium* ssp. *angustifolium*), strawberryleaf raspberry (*Rubus pedatus*), purple marshlocks (*Comarum palustre*), elephanthead lousewort (*Pedicularis groenlandica*), sphagnum moss, sedges (*Carex* spp.), roundleaf sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*), and rushes (*Juncus* spp.).

**Comments:** This taxon is also rare in ID, MT, WY, PA, and CT.

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



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,  
©1969 University of Washington  
Press



© Dana Visalli



photo by Therese Ohlson