

CAREX LIMOSA L.
Mud Sedge

FAMILY: Cyperaceae.

HABIT: Tufted perennial from an elongate, brown, scaly rootstalk, fertile culms mostly solitary, 2-6 dm.; fruiting May-June.

SIMILAR SPECIES: This species and *Carex buxbaumii* both have glaucous foliage and strongly bicolor green and black pistillate scales. Both also may occur in similar habitats. However, in *C. limosa* the terminal spike is entirely staminate. *C. limosa* has slender, long-pedicelled lower spikelets and elongate rootstalks, while *C. buxbaumii* has thick, short-pedicelled lower spikelets and very short rootstalks. The common *C. torta* also has bicolor pistillate scales, but can be distinguished from *C. limosa* by its very early blooming date, the green foliage, and its alluvial habitat.

TOTAL RANGE: Circumboreal in N.A., s. to DE, NJ, OH, and IA.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): There are post-1980 records from Geauga, Licking, Portage, and Wayne counties. There are pre-1980 records from Ashland, Ashtabula, and Fairfield counties.

HABITAT: Bogs, on sphagnum mats in full sun; rarely in fens.

HAZARDS: Overgrowth by woody species through succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Poor; although it is rhizomatous, most colonies rarely flower; habitat is very limited in Ohio.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect complete, mature specimens with underground parts.

COMMENTS: This sedge is easily identified when in mature fruit. This state, however, is only of a brief duration. More populations might be discovered in Northeast Ohio if searches were made from late May through mid June. The current known populations rarely flower (no fruiting culms have been observed at some localities). It has been rediscovered at a few localities where it was previously collected.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

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