

CAREX OLIGOSPERMA Michx.
Few-seeded Sedge

FAMILY: Cyperaceae.

HABIT: Loosely tufted perennial from an elongate, slender rootstalk, fertile culms mostly solitary, 3-10 dm.; fruiting June-August.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *C. oligosperma* differs from closely-related sedges, such as *C. tuckermanii* and *C. vesicaria*, in its quill-like, involute, not flat, leaves. It is similar in general appearance to *C. lasiocarpa*, which also has involute leaves and which grows in similar habitats. These two species are difficult to separate when sterile, a condition frequently encountered. They can be distinguished best by technical characters of size and shape of perigynia.

TOTAL RANGE: Newfoundland to Mack., s. to CT, PA, IN, and WI.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): There are post-1980 records from Portage, Stark, and Summit counties. There are pre-1980 records from Defiance County.

HABITAT: Open, wet situations in acidic substrates; peat bogs, marshes, bog lakes; at times a significant component of sphagnum mats.

HAZARDS: Overgrowth by woody species through succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but possibly good due to its rhizomatous habit.

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

COMMENTS: It is quite easy to overlook this species. Very few fertile culms are produced and these often are hidden among a luxuriant growth of sterile leaves. There also is a great possibility of mistaking this plant for *C. lasiocarpa* (see Similar Species). It should be sought throughout northern Ohio. It well may be more frequent than the few records indicate.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Gleason, H.A. and Cronquist, A. 1991. Manual of vascular plants of northeastern United States and adjacent Canada. 2nd ed. The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx NY. 910 pp.

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