

CAREX SICCATATA Dewey
Hay Sedge

FAMILY: Cyperaceae.

SYNONYM: *Carex foenea* Willd.

HABIT: Tufted perennial from an elongate, thick, brown, fibrillose root-stalk, fertile culms mostly solitary, 2-9 dm.; fruiting mid May-June.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Very similar to *Carex sartwellii* from which it can be distinguished by the following characters: *C. siccata*--perigynia strongly flattened and wing-margined, rhizome thick and brown; *C. sartwellii*--perigynia slightly rounded and thin-margined, rhizome slender and black. In addition, *Carex sartwellii* grows in wet situations, whereas *Carex siccata* is always associated with well-drained habitats.

TOTAL RANGE: ME to Mack, s. to NJ, OH, IL, MN, and AZ.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Lucas County. There is an 1896 collection from Erie County.

HABITAT: Well-drained, open situations in sandy or rocky soil; open oak woods and borders, sand pits, sand dunes, beach ridges.

HAZARDS: Overgrowth by woody species through succession; compaction of loose soil.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but possibly good due to the rhizomatous habit; it is known from disturbed sites.

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

COMMENTS: This sedge should be sought throughout northern Ohio, especially in the Oak Openings area where suitable habitats are frequent. It likely is overlooked and/or misidentified. It well may be more frequent than the few records indicate. This species has ecological value as a binder of loose sand. Svenson (1938) explains how the name *C. foenea* (see synonyms) was misapplied for many years. The dissimilar *C. argyrantha* was erroneously referred to as *C. foenea*; many older records were thus labeled. Care should be taken with historic records of these two sedges to prevent further erroneous citations. This entity is now usually treated as *C. siccata*.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

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

Mackenzie, K.K. 1940. North American Cariceae. N.Y. Bot. Gard., pl. 22.

Svenson, H.K. 1938. *Carex foenea*, *C. straminea*, and *C. albicans* in Willdenow's herbarium. *Rhodora* 40: 325-331.

Voss, E.G. 1972. Michigan flora, Part I, Gymnosperms and monocots. Cranbrook Inst. of Sci. Bull. 55, Bloomfield Hills, MI. 488 p.



Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Created: 2/1984 Allison W. Cusick