

***Carex timida* R. F. C. Naczi & B. A. Ford**
Timid Sedge



Family: Cyperaceae

Synonyms: None

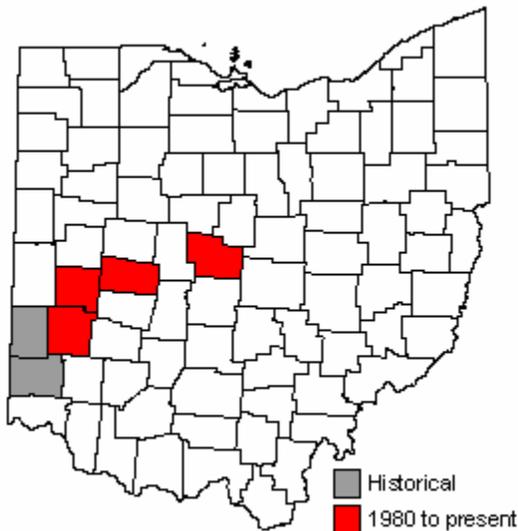
Description: Culms up to 34 cm; leaves basal brown and tinged red-purple; blades exceeding culms; staminate spike 2-12 flowered, 3.4-5.6 long, pistillate spike 2-3 (rarely 4 flowered); perigynia 2-3 (rarely 4) per spike, narrowly ovoid, obovoid, or ellipsoid 4.3-5.5 x 1.6-2.1 mm; beak 1.4-2.3 (rarely up to 2.5) mm long, scabrous (Naczi & Ford 2001).

Flowering: late April to late May

Fruiting: early May to late June (rarely to mid-July).

Similar Species: *Carex timida* is a recently described species split from *Carex jamesii* (Naczi & Ford 2001). *Carex timida*

differs from *C. jamesii* by its culms that are purplish-red at the base and by the shorter staminate portion of the terminal spike. *Carex timida* typically is a smaller plant and has weaker (often dropping when mature) fertile culms than *C. jamesii*. It may also be confused with similar sedges *C. juniperorum* and *C. willdenowii*.



Total Range: USA: AL, AR, IN, KY, MO, OH, OK, TN.

Ohio Range: Butler, Champaign, Delaware, Miami, Montgomery, and Preble counties.

Ohio Status: www.ohiodnr.com/dnap

Habitats: Dry to mesic woods and cedar woodlands on limestone-based soils.

Threats: Development and incompatible logging threaten the species.

Conservation Potential: *Carex timida* appears to tolerate moderate disturbances as it has been

found in young woodlands. Two sites are protected on public conservation lands.

Inventory Guidelines: A mature fruiting specimen with roots is recommended for proper identification. Collecting should be minimal. Specimens cannot be accurately identified from photographs.

Comments: In Ohio, it has been found growing in dry to mesic woods under *Acer saccharum*, *Prunus serotina*, *Fraxinus americana*, *Ulmus americana*, *Fraxinus quadrangulata*, and *Juniperus virginiana*. It also has been found in a dry, open situation with scattered *Juniperus virginiana*.

Carex timida is likely more frequent than currently known. It should be sought throughout western Ohio.

More research is needed to determine the ecological requirements for the species.

Selected References:

Flora of North America Editorial Committee, eds. 2002. Flora of North America north of Mexico. Vol. 23. New York and Oxford. 608 pp.

Naczi, R.F.C. & B.A. Ford. 2001. Systematics of the *Carex jamesii* complex (Cyperaceae: Sect. *Phytlostachyae*), Sida 19(4): 853-884.

Naczi, R.F.C. & B.A. Ford. 2001. Genetic diversity in the *Carex jamesii* complex (Cyperaceae: Sect. *Phytlostachyae*) with insights into the evolution and origin of the newly described species *Carex timida*, Sida 19(4): 885-897.



Ohio Natural Heritage Program

ODNR - Division of Natural Areas & Preserves

2045 Morse Road, Building F-1

Columbus, Ohio 43229

www.ohiodnr.com/dnap

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