

CYPERUS RETROFRACTUS (L) Torrey
Rough Umbrella-sedge

FAMILY: Cyperaceae

SYNONYMS: *Cyperus retrofractus* (L.) Torrey var. *dipsaciformis* (Fernald) Kukenthal.

HABIT: Herbaceous perennial from a short, thick rhizome with corm-like enlargements; culms 2.5-8 dm.; fruiting August-September.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Very similar to *Cyperus lancastrimensis*, from which it can be distinguished only with difficulty. Close examination of technical characters of the scales and spikelets is required. Superficially resembles the common *C. strigosus*, but differs in its strongly reflexed lower spikelets with terete or angled, not compressed scales.

TOTAL RANGE: GA to MO, n. to NJ and OH.

STATE RANGE: There are post-1950 collections from Gallia and Jackson counties. There is a pre-1950 specimen from Hocking County.

STATE STATUS: 1980 to present: Endangered.

HABITAT: A variety of open, dry situations, usually in sandy soil; fields, open woods, clearings, barrens.

HAZARDS: Overshading by woody species as a result of succession; soil compaction.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Probably good, since it is tolerant of moderate disturbance.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect complete mature specimens.

COMMENTS: When typical, this is a fairly distinctive sedge. However, it is very difficult to determine accurately many Ohio specimens of *C. dipsaciformis* and *C. lancastrimensis*. They not only grow in the same habitats, but also seem to intergrade with one another. This taxonomic problem deserves serious study.

C. dipsaciformis occasionally is treated as a variety of *C. retrofractus*. The specific rank is retained here, however, pending more information.

This species should be sought throughout southern Ohio.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Radford, A.E., H.E. Ahles and C.R. Bell. 1968. Manual of the vascular flora of the Carolinas. Univ. of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC. 1183 p.



Division of Natural Areas and Preserves
Ohio Department of Natural Resources

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