

CAREX BREVIOR (Dewey) Mackenzie
Tufted Fescue Sedge

FAMILY: Cyperaceae

SYNONYMS: *Carex festucacea* Schkuhr ex Willd. var. *brevior* (Dewey) Fernald

HABIT: Flowering stems 15-120 cm long; short rhizomes, forming tufts or clumps; flowering/fruitleting May-June.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Carex brevior* is often confused with *C. molesta* and *C. festucacea*. The spikelets of *C. brevior* have a more clavate base than *C. molesta*. The perigynia of *C. brevior* have no or a few faint nerves on the ventral side compared to *C. molesta* and *C. festucacea* that have strong nerves on the ventral side. The achenes of *C. festucacea* are smaller than *C. brevior*; scarcely 1.5 mm long compared to 1.6 – 2 mm long for *C. brevior*.

TOTAL RANGE: Quebec to VA, w. to the Pacific.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): There are post-1980 records from Ashtabula, Delaware, Erie, Meigs, and Ottawa counties. There are pre-1980 records from Columbiana, Highland, Hocking, Lake, Logan, and Madison counties.

HABITAT: Usually found in dry, open habitats such as upland prairies, sand dunes, limestone and dolomite bluffs, and alvars; rare in wet habitats such as marshes and fens; sometimes in disturbed habitats, roadsides and along ditches.

HAZARDS: Overgrown by woody vegetation through succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Possibly good, as it can grow in disturbed habitats.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect complete, mature fruiting material.

COMMENTS: Gleason and Cronquist (1991) merge *C. molesta* under *C. brevior* without rank. This has resulted in false reports. The Ovaies group of the genus *Carex* is a very difficult group to identify and careful examination of mature specimens is required for identification.

C. brevior occurs primarily in basic soils and grows best in open habitats.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Braun, E.L. 1967. The Monocotyledoneae [of Ohio]: Cattails to orchids. The Ohio State University Press, Columbus, OH. 464 p.

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

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