

CAREX BRUNNESCENS (Pers.) Poiret
Brownish Sedge

FAMILY: Cyperaceae.

HABIT: Loosely tufted perennial from a short, blackish, fibrillose rootstalk, fertile culms 7-70 cm.; fruiting June-August.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Very similar to *Carex canescens* from which it can be distinguished by its obviously beaked, not merely apiculate, perigynia. The foliage of *C. canescens* also tends to be broader and more glaucous than that of *C. brunnescens*. Also very similar to members of the section *Stellulatae*, especially *C. interior*. These species of *Stellulatae* can be identified by the well-developed spongy tissue at the base of their perigynia. All these characters are best observed in mature specimens.

TOTAL RANGE: Circumboreal, s. to NJ, OH, MI, MN, and in the mountains to NC.

STATE RANGE(as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Ashtabula, Geauga, Portage, and Summit counties. There are pre-1980 collections from Lake, Logan, and Trumbull counties.

HABITAT: Moist, shaded situations; shrub borders of bogs, swamp woods, seepages; tolerant of deep shade.

HAZARDS: Clearing of forest canopy.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but probably poor.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect complete, mature specimens.

COMMENTS: This obscure sedge is easily overlooked and/or misidentified. It should be sought throughout northern Ohio. More populations likely will be discovered. *Carex brunnescens* has been split into two varieties by some authors. In such a treatment, Ohio plants would be the var. *sphaerostachya* (Tuckerm.) Kukenth. The distinctions between these varieties are obscure and most manuals do not recognize them. More research is needed to assess the true status of these varieties.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

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