Short-hair Sedge (*Carex crinta* var. *brevicrinis*)

Plant Species of Concern

State Rank: S1 (critically imperiled), Global Rank: G5T5 (secure)

Identification

Short hair sedge is tufted grass-like plant that grows 2¼ to 5 feet (7-15 dm) tall. Its rough stems are 3-sided, particularly near the base.
The leaves grow alternately along the stems. They are linear, hairless, and up to ½ inch (13 mm) wide. There are also long, sheathless, leaf-like bracts that grow near the tops of the flowering stems. The flowers are held in cylindrical spikes near the top of flowering stems. Male and female flowers are found in separate spikes, with a slender male spike held above a small cluster of drooping female spikes. The female spikes are up to 4 inches (10 cm) long and contain many sac-like structures (perigynia) that are each subtended by a scale with a long bristle-tip. The feature that most distinguishes the two variants is the lack of a notch in the nutlet found only in *C. crinita var. brevicrinis*.

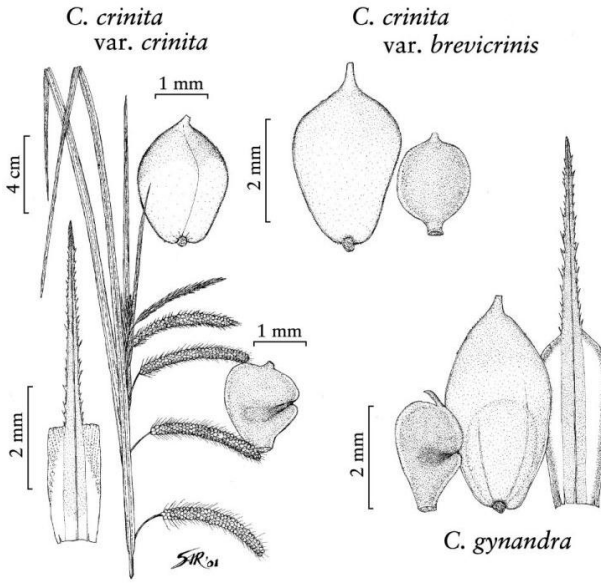
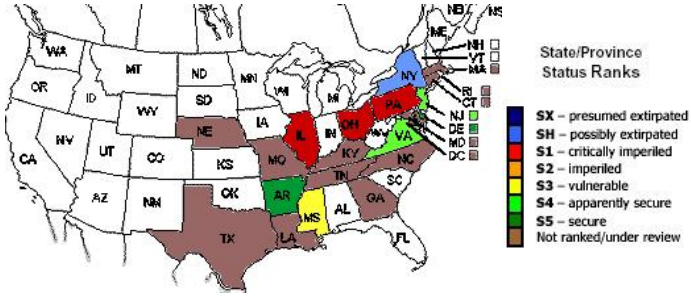
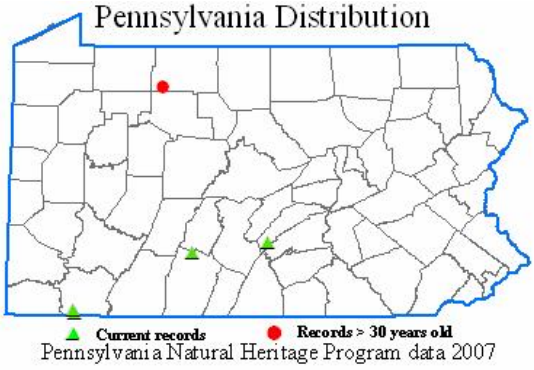


photo source: Flora of North America
www.efloras.org

North American State/Province Conservation Status
Map by NatureServe (2007)





Habitat

Short hair sedge's range extends from New York south to Georgia and west to Nebraska and Texas. This species is a wetland plant and grows in moist to wet woodlands.

Status

The PA Biological Survey considers the short hair sedge to be a species of special concern, based on the very few occurrences that have been confirmed and the specialized and infrequent habitat. It has been assigned a rarity status of Endangered. Throughout the range of this species, habitat loss, land conversion for development, and displacement by invasive species have all played a part in its decline. Its wetland habitats are also sensitive to habitat fragmentation and changes in hydrology that could alter water levels or chemistry.

Conservation

Maintenance of known populations and preservation of the communities where short hair sedge grows will be crucial to its survival. Creating buffers around fragmented habitat, removal of invasive species, and protection of wetland hydrology will help to maintain populations and encourage new population growth. The management of the known sites requires long term monitoring of populations. Potential sites for restoration should be evaluated.

Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

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