Bog Sedge
Carex paupercula

Description

Bog Sedge is a grass-like plant with aerial stems that are triangular in cross-section and may grow to 2 feet in height (0.6 m), but are usually shorter. The leaves consist of a basal sheath that envelopes the stem and a linear, elongated blade that is about 1/8 inch (3 mm) in width. The flowers, appearing from May to July, are minute and are grouped in male or female clusters, with the usually single and stalked male cluster in an erect position at the top of the stem and the female clusters numbering 1-3 on drooping stalks farther down the stem. The female cluster consists of individual inflated sac-like structures, or perigynia, which are about 1/8 inch (3 mm) in length and contain 1 flower and later the three-sided fruit. In this species the individual perigynia are subtended and exceeded in length by a narrow, brownish, scale-like bract.

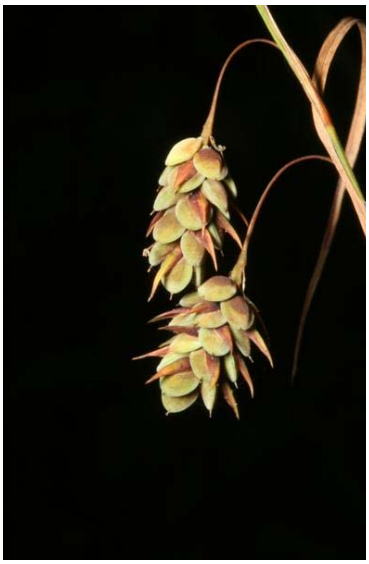


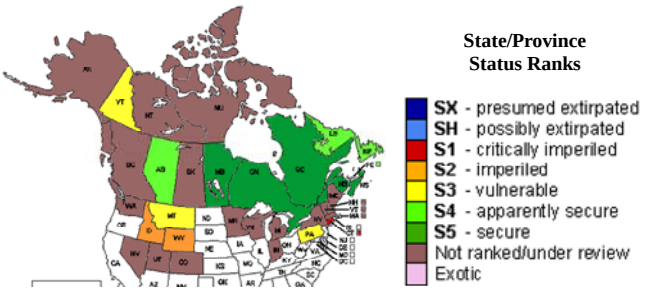
Photo source: Charlie Eichelberger (PNHP)

Distribution & Habitat

Bog Sedge has a transcontinental range across the cooler regions of North America. In Pennsylvania, it is considered a northern species, and has been documented historically in the northern counties. The species grows in bogs and peaty wetlands.

North American State/Province Conservation Status

Map by NatureServe 2010

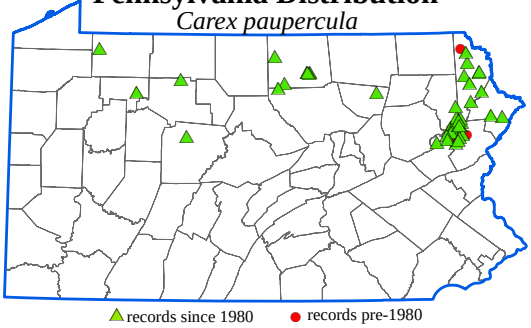


Current State Status

The PA Biological Survey (PABS) considers Bog Sedge to be a species of special concern, based on the moderate number of locations recently confirmed and the wetland habitat. It has a PA legal rarity status of Threatened and a PABS suggested rarity status of Rare.

Pennsylvania Distribution

Carex paupercula



records since 1980 ● records pre-1980

Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program Data 3-2011

Conservation Considerations

The viability of populations of Bog Sedge and its habitat may be enhanced by creating buffers and protecting the natural hydrology around wetlands and controlling invasive species.

NatureServe conservation status ranks

G5 – Globally secure; S3– Vulnerable in Pennsylvania

References

- NatureServe. 2011. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available at http://www.natureserve.org/explorer.
- Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program. 2011.
- Rhoads, A.F. and W.M. Klein, Jr. 1993. The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania: Annotated Checklist and Atlas. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Rhoads, A.F. and T.A. Block. 2007. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. 2nd edition. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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