



*Carex atrosquama*. (A) Inflorescences, (B) pistillate scales, (C) perigynia, (D) achenes. B through D: Left and center—dorsal views; right—ventral view.

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***Carex atosquama* Mack.**  
**Dark-scaled sedge**

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**HABIT:** Densely caespitose from short, slender rhizomes. **Culms:** Slender, erect or nodding at maturity, dark reddish-tinged at the base, 1.5-5 dm tall, exceeding the leaves, **phyllopodic**, dried leaves of the previous year conspicuous.

**LEAVES:** 7-10, clustered near the base. **Blades:** Attenuate, firm, flat with slightly revolute margins, 1.5-3.5 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Concave at the mouth; lower sheaths sparingly filamentose; upper sheaths whitish or yellowish white ventrally.

**BRACTS:** Lowest leaflike, sheathless, shorter to longer than the inflorescence; upper reduced.

**SPIKES:** 3-4, erect, oblong, densely flowered, greenish gold, 6-20 mm long, 5-6 mm wide, forming an oblong head 2.5-4 cm long and 0.8-1.2 cm wide. **Terminal: Gynaecandrous**, clavate at the base, sessile, approximate. **Lateral: Pistillate**, short-pedunculate; lowest somewhat separate; perigynia appressed-ascending.

**PISTILLATE SCALES:** Broadly ovate-oblong with an obtuse or acute tip, shorter and slightly narrower than the perigynia, dark brown to black, the midvein obsolete and upper margins slightly hyaline.

**PERIGYNIA:** Narrowly oblong, obcompressed to plano-convex, granular-roughened above, olive green to yellowish brown, somewhat reddish-spotted, 4-4.5 mm long, 1.5-1.8 mm wide. **Nerves:** Lacking or marginal only. **Beaks:** Reddish black, sharp-edged, terete at the tip, shallowly bidentate, 0.5 mm long.

**ACHENES:** Obovoid, trigonous, slightly granular, stipitate, dull yellowish brown, 1.5-2 mm long, 1 mm wide. **Stigmas:** 3.

**HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION:** Infrequent and local in moist to dry mountain meadows, forest openings, and on rocky alpine slopes at **high elevations**. British Columbia and Alberta south to Oregon, Idaho, Utah (Uinta Mountains), western Montana, and Colorado. **July-August.**

**SIMILAR SPECIES:** See appendix, table 2.