



Carex foetida var. *vernacula*. (A) Inflorescences, (B) pistillate scales, (C) perigynia, (D) achenes. B through D: Left—dorsal view; right—ventral view.

Carex foetida All. var. *vernacula* (Bailey) Kükenth.
Foetid sedge

SYNONYMS: *C. foetida* All., *C. vernacula* Bailey.

HABIT: Cespitose or loosely aggregated from short rhizomes or the culms borne singly on somewhat elongate rhizomes. **Culms:** Triangular, 0.5-3 dm tall, exceeding the leaves, **phyllopodic**.

LEAVES: Borne on the lower one-third of the culm. **Blades:** Flat, thick, firm, 2-4 mm wide, gradually tapering to a slender tip. **Sheath:** Thin and hyaline ventrally, concave at the mouth.

BRACTS: Lowest short and inconspicuous; otherwise none.

SPIKES: Numerous, **androgynous**, sessile, indistinguishable, closely aggregated into a compact, brown, globose or ovoid head 8-16 mm long; perigynia spreading-ascending, anthers numerous and conspicuous.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Broadly ovate, acute to acuminate at the tip, equaling or slightly shorter than the perigynia and concealing them, shining dark brown, hyaline-scarious throughout except for the slender, often paler midrib.

PERIGYNIA: Lanceolate or narrowly elliptic to obovate, broadly tapered to the slender stipitate base, flattened, brownish with thin, pale green margins, 3-3.8 mm long, 1-1.8 mm wide. **Nerves:** Lacking or 5-10 toward the base on both surfaces, well-developed on the margins. **Beaks:** Prominent, 0.8-1.7 mm long, abruptly tapered to a slender, obliquely cleft tip.

ACHENES: Ovate, lenticular, short-stipitate, light to dark brown, 1.1-1.5 mm long, 0.7-1.1 mm wide. **Stigmas:** 2.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: In moist or wet places at **high elevations** especially at the edges of melting snowfields and in meltwater streams. Irregularly distributed from southern Washington to the Sierra Nevada and adjacent White Mountains of California, Utah, and Nevada, the Wallowa Mountains and Steens Mountain of Oregon, and the southern Rocky Mountains of Wyoming and Colorado. **June-August.**