



*Carex rupestris*. (A) Inflorescences, (B) pistillate scales, (C) perigynia, (D) achenes (achene on right partially enveloped in the perigynium and with a twisted rachilla at its base). B and C: Left and center—dorsal views; right—ventral view. D: Left and right—dorsal views; center—ventral view.

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*Carex rupestris* All.  
Curly sedge, rock sedge

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**HABIT:** Culms arising singly or loosely tufted from slender, scaly, creeping rhizomes. **Culms:** Rather stout and stiffly erect, dark reddish purple at the base, 4-15 cm tall, shorter than to equaling the leaves, slightly **phyllopodic**, leaf sheaths of the previous year persistent.

**LEAVES:** 8-12, clustered near the base. **Blades:** More or less circinate, flat, channeled, somewhat thick, attenuated at the apex, 1-3 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Hyaline ventrally, truncate at the mouth.

**BRACTS:** None.

**SPIKES:** Solitary, reddish brown, **androgynous**, oblong to linear, 1-2 cm long, 3-4.5 mm wide; the pistillate portion closely to sparsely flowered; perigynia erect to ascending.

**PISTILLATE SCALES:** Orbiculate-ovate with an acute to obtuse or broadly rounded tip, shorter to longer than the perigynia and largely concealing them, more or less scarious with hyaline margins, brown to deep chestnut.

**PERIGYNIA:** Oblong-obovoid, thin-walled, smooth, narrow or substipitate at the base, green below, brown to reddish brown above, 3-4 mm long, 1.75 mm wide. **Nerves:** Several on both surfaces, slightly raised; marginal nerves present. **Beaks:** Slender, terete, entire, obscurely hyaline-tipped, 0.2 mm long.

**ACHENES:** Oblong, trigonous, apiculate, smooth and shining, dark brown or black, completely filling the perigynium, 2.5 mm long, 1.5 mm wide; rachilla absent. **Stigmas:** 3.

**HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION:** Infrequent but sometimes locally plentiful on dry, alpine summits, open slopes, and tundra. **High elevations.** Circumboreal. In North America from Alberta to Quebec, extending southward irregularly to eastern Idaho, Utah (above timberline in the Uinta Mountains), Wyoming, and Colorado. **July-August.**