



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

***Carex vallicola* Dewey**
Valley sedge

HABIT: Clustered on short stout, pale or brown, rhizomes. **Culms:** Slender, roughened on the angles, 1.5-6 dm tall, longer than the leaves, slightly **aphyllopodic**.

LEAVES: 3, clustered at the base. **Blades:** Flat or canaliculate, slender, 0.5-2 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Light, thin, and hyaline ventrally, truncate to shallowly concave at the mouth.

BRACTS: Sheathless, short or sometimes filiform-elongate to 3 cm long.

SPIKES: Several, **androgynous**, small, sessile, green becoming stramineous, few-flowered, loosely aggregated into an irregular, narrowly oblong-cylindric head 1-3 cm long, 4-8 mm wide; perigynia spreading or spreading-ascending, producing a ragged appearance.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Broadly triangular with an acute tip, shorter than the perigynia, broadly white-hyaline on the margins with a brownish or pale-nerved center.

PERIGYNIA: Oblong-elliptic, strongly plano-convex, broadly rounded on the convex dorsal side, glossy at maturity, greenish or greenish-stramineous and coppery-tinged, 2.5-4 mm long, 1.5-2.5 mm wide. **Nerves:** Displaced from margins somewhat onto the ventral side (ventro-marginal); otherwise appearing nerveless or with obscure basal nerves. **Beaks:** Abruptly narrowed, minutely serrulate, obliquely cleft, slightly bidentate, reddish brown at the tip, 0.6-1 mm long.

ACHENES: Orbicular, lenticular, stramineous or pale, 1.6-2.5 mm long, about 1.4-2.1 mm wide, filling the perigynium, jointed to the style. **Stigmas:** 2.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: Common on wet or moderately dry slopes from **foothills to moderate elevations** in the mountains, often with sagebrush or under aspen. Eastern Oregon to California and east to Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, western South Dakota, New Mexico, and Mexico. **April-August.**

SIMILAR SPECIES: See *C. disperma*.