



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

Carex brunnescens (Pers.) Poiret
Brownish sedge

HABIT: Densely caespitose from short rhizomes. **Culms:** Slender, lax, 2-6 dm tall, exceeding the leaves, slightly **aphyllopodic**.

LEAVES: Clustered near the base. **Blades:** Flat, thin, deep green, 1-2.5 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Tight, thin and hyaline ventrally, concave at the mouth.

BRACTS: Lower sheathless, setaceous, generally shorter than to surpassing the inflorescence; upper inconspicuous.

SPIKES: 4-9, **gynaecandrous**, sessile, pale to golden brown or brown, 4-8 mm long; lower generally remote; upper approximate; terminal clavate; perigynia 5-15, spreading at maturity.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Ovate, with an acute tip, shorter than the perigynia, mostly white-hyaline or scarious with a firm, green midvein.

PERIGYNIA: Oval-ovate, broadest near the middle with raised margins, spongy-thickened below, plano-convex, the wall very thin distally and easily ruptured, not thin-edged, green to pale brown, 1.7-2.7 mm long, 1-1.5 mm wide. **Nerves:** Several, fine dorsally, obscure or lacking ventrally. **Beaks:** Serrulate, obliquely cleft, minutely bidentate, 0.5-0.7 mm long; dorsal suture prominent with a white-hyaline, slightly overlapping flap.

ACHENES: Ovate-orbicular, lenticular, yellowish to brownish, 1.2-1.5 mm long, 1 mm wide; style jointed to the base. **Stigmas:** 2.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: Occasional to frequent in bogs and wet meadows at **high elevations**. Circumboreal. In North America from Alaska to Labrador extending south to Oregon, Idaho, Utah (Uinta Mountains), Wyoming, Colorado, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Georgia. Seldom collected in the Intermountain area. **June-August**.

SIMILAR SPECIES: See appendix, table 5.