



Carex capillaris. (A) Pistillate scales, (B) perigynia, (C) achenes, (D) inflorescences. A through C: Left—dorsal view; right—ventral view.

Carex capillaris L.

Hair sedge

HABIT: Plants densely tufted from short roots. **Culms:** Very slender, obtusely triangular, smooth, 0.3-6 dm tall, exceeding the leaves, strongly **phyllopodic**.

LEAVES: 5-8, clustered toward the base. **Blades:** Flat, thin but firm, 0.5-4 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Becoming brownish with age, truncate at the mouth.

BRACTS: Lowest leaflike with a well-developed sheath, shorter to longer than the inflorescence; upper reduced.

SPIKES: 2-4, brown, linear-oblong on nodding or loosely spreading peduncles. **Terminal: Staminate** or rarely gynaeandrous, 4-10 mm long, 0.75-1 mm wide. **Lateral: Pistillate**, more or less remote, 4-17 mm long, 3-4 mm wide; perigynia 3-25, ascending, loosely arranged.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Ovate, mostly obtuse at the apex, wider and shorter than the perigynia, closely appressed, early deciduous, thin, light brown or greenish, white-hyaline distally.

PERIGYNIA: Ovoid-lanceolate, obtusely trigonous, slightly ciliate and slightly serrulate toward the apex, stipitate, greenish brown or usually shiny brown to brownish olive green, 2-4 mm long, 0.75-1.2 mm wide.

Nerves: Obliquely 2-ribbed or lacking. **Beaks:** Conic, tapered, 1 mm long, hyaline-tipped, entire.

ACHENES: Obovoid, trigonous with blunt angles, substipitate, brownish to dark greenish brown, green on the angles, 1.2-1.5 mm long, 0.7 mm wide, jointed to the style. **Stigmas:** 3.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: Streambanks, wet meadows, and wet ledges from **moderate to high elevations** in the mountains, up to about timberline. Circumboreal. In North America from southern British Columbia to north-central Washington (Okanogan County), northeastern Oregon (Wallowa Mountains), northeastern Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico, Michigan, and New York. **June-August.**