



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

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**Carex ebenea Rydb.**  
**Ebony sedge**

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**HABIT:** Tufted without creeping rhizomes. **Culms:** Conspicuously striate, obtusely triangular, thick at the base, 1-5.5 dm tall, exceeding the leaves, slightly **aphyllopodic**.

**LEAVES:** 3-5, clustered toward the base. **Blades:** Flat, firm, 2-4 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Ventrally with a narrow strip of thin and hyaline material, truncate to shallowly concave at the mouth.

**BRACTS:** Sheathless, scarious-margined at the base, setaceous or short-awned, shorter than the inflorescence.

**SPIKES:** 5-10, **gynaecandrous**, sessile, narrowly oblong, 7-15 mm long, closely aggregated into a dense, globose-ovoid, greenish black to brownish gold head 1.5-3 cm long, 12-28 mm wide, tapering at the base; perigynia appressed-ascending.

**PISTILLATE SCALES:** Ovate-lanceolate with an acute to obtuse tip, brownish black or black with the margins very narrow and hyaline, shorter and narrower than the perigynia, exposing their beaks and margins.

**PERIGYNIA:** Narrowly lanceolate to oblanceolate, flat or plano-convex, narrowly **wing**-margined or thin-edged to the round-tapering spongy base, margins serrulate above the middle, coppery brown with green margins to golden brown throughout or brownish black, 3.5-7.1 mm long, 1.1-1.7 mm wide. **Nerves:** Fine, usually several on both surfaces. **Beaks:** Slender, serrulate, 0.9-1.5 mm long; the distal part darker, terete, hyaline-tipped, obliquely cleft and only shallowly, if at all bidentate; dorsal suture present with overlapping hyaline margins.

**ACHENES:** Oval-oblong, lenticular, 1.3-2 mm long, 1.25 mm wide, jointed to the stipe that traverses the spongy base. **Stigmas:** 2.

**HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION:** Fairly common to locally abundant in wet to moderately dry places at **high elevations** in the mountains. In the Rocky Mountain region from central Idaho and Montana to Utah (Uinta, LaSal, and Abajo Mountains), western Wyoming, northern Arizona, and New Mexico. **June-August.**

**SIMILAR SPECIES:** See appendix, table 1. *C. ebenea*—Culms obtusely triangular; leaves flat, clustered toward the base; perigynium coppery brown, widest below the middle; beak terete, shallowly bidentate. *C. leporinella*—Culms sharply triangular; leaves involute, not clustered; perigynium brown or pale, widest about the middle; beak flat, deeply bidentate.