



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

Carex geyeri Boott
Elk sedge, Geyer sedge

HABIT: Loosely to rather densely clustered from a system of branching rhizomes, sometimes forming tussocks. **Culms:** Stiffly erect, sharply triangular, very rough above, 1-5 dm tall, shorter to longer than the leaves, strongly **aphyllopodic**.

LEAVES: Generally 2. **Blades:** Flat or channeled, stiff with rough margins, leathery, medium to dark green, 1.5-4 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Tight, hyaline ventrally, truncate at the mouth, the lower enclosing the remainder of the leaves and the fruiting culm, fascicle-like in appearance.

BRACTS: None.

SPIKES: Solitary, tan to brown, **androgynous; staminate** portion linear, 1-2.5 cm long; perigynia 1-3, somewhat remote near the base, appressed-ascending.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Persistent, narrowly oblong, brownish to greenish, often with a paler midrib, hyaline-margined; the lower short-awned and surpassing the perigynium; the upper shorter and more acuminate or obtuse at the tip.

PERIGYNIA: Oblong-ovoid, tapering at the somewhat spongy base, rounded and abruptly contracted at the apex, triangular, glossy, glabrous, stoutly short-stipitate, greenish to greenish-stramineous or brownish, 5-7 mm long, 1.7-3.5 mm wide. **Nerves:** Two-ribbed, otherwise absent. **Beaks:** Very short or obsolete, bidentate or nearly so.

ACHENES: Obpyramidal, apiculate, sharply trigonous, 4-6.2 mm long, 1.2-3 mm wide, filling the perigynium; rachilla varies from lacking to equaling the achene. **Stigmas:** 3.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: Common. Woodlands, open slopes, and dry meadows at **moderate to high elevations** in foothills and mountains. British Columbia and Alberta south to Oregon, northern California (where rare), Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado. One of the most common sedges in the northwest and northern Great Basin. **April-July.**

SIMILAR SPECIES: *C. geyeri*—Culms loosely to densely clustered from creeping rhizomes; lower pistillate scales short-awned, surpassing the perigynia; perigynia oblong-ovoid to triangular, glossy, nerved on the margins only; common in the Intermountain area. *C. multicaulis*—Culms densely clustered without creeping rhizomes; lower pistillate scales leaf-like, much longer than the inflorescence; perigynia oblong-ovate, triangular, or ellipsoid, not glossy; nerves many, faint; occurs in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and Elko County, Nevada.