



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

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*Carex pyrenaica* Wahl.  
Pyrenaean sedge

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**HABIT:** Densely caespitose without creeping rhizomes. **Culms:** Erect, slender and wiry, 0.3-3 dm tall, equaling or exceeding the leaves, somewhat **aphyllopodic**, old basal sheaths persistent.

**LEAVES:** 2-4, often clustered near the base. **Blades:** Flat or deeply channeled, wiry, 2-10 cm long, 0.25-1.5 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Thin, hyaline ventrally, slightly concave at the mouth.

**BRACTS:** None. Lowest pistillate scale occasionally bractlike.

**SPIKES:** Solitary, dark brown to red brown, **androgynous**, linear-oblong, 5-20 mm long, 3-5 mm wide; **staminate** portion small and inconspicuous; perigynia ascending.

**PISTILLATE SCALES:** Lowest pistillate scale sometimes setaceous and bractlike, upper ones oblong to ovate with an obtuse to somewhat acute tips, dark brown to blackish chestnut with pale centers and narrow hyaline margins, shorter, but usually wider than the perigynia, early to tardily deciduous.

**PERIGYNIA:** Lanceolate to elliptic-ovate, tapering to a narrow apex, smooth and shiny, stipitate, dark brown or black distally, paler or green to stramineous below, 3-4.5 mm long, 0.7-1.5 mm long. **Nerves:** Lacking on both surfaces; marginal nerves present. **Beaks:** Ill-defined, obliquely cleft, hyaline-tipped, 0.5 mm long.

**ACHENES:** Somewhat obovoid, trigonous, attached to its base by a long slender stipe that breaks easily, pale to brown, 1.2-1.8 mm long, 0.7-1 mm wide. **Stigmas:** 3.

**HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION:** Cliff crevices, ledges, open slopes, and meadows at **high elevations**. From the cordilleran region of western North America south to Washington (Cascade Mountains), Oregon (Wallowa Mountains), Utah (above timberline in the Uinta Mountains), and Colorado. **June-August**.

**SIMILAR SPECIES:** See appendix, table 4.