



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

Carex scopulorum Holm
Cliff sedge, Holm Rocky Mountain sedge,
mountain sedge, rock sedge

HABIT: Scattered or loosely clustered from dark reddish-tinged, scaly rhizomes; sod-forming. **Culms:** Stiffly erect, stout, 1-4(6) dm tall, exceeding the leaves, **phyllopodic** to **aphyllopodic**.

LEAVES: 8-15, clustered at the base. **Blades:** Firm, flat with revolute margins, 2-7 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Thin, reddish-tinged ventrally, shallowly concave at the mouth.

BRACTS: Lowest foliaceous or setaceous, sheathless, black-auriculate, 1-7 cm long, shorter than the inflorescence; upper reduced and scalelike.

SPIKES: 3-6, erect, short, oblong to cylindrical, bicolored with green or tan and purplish black, occasionally solid purplish black, crowded or the lowest one removed, 1-3 cm long. **Terminal: Staminate** or androgynous, occasionally gynaeandrous. **Lateral:** Wholly **pistillate** or sometimes androgynous, closely many-flowered, sessile or lowest ones short-pedunculate; perigynia squarrose-spreading.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Obovate, usually with an obtuse tip, narrower and shorter than or equaling the perigynia, scarious throughout, black or purplish black to dark reddish brown.

PERIGYNIA: Orbicular to broadly obovoid, strongly biconvex and turgid, rounded to a sessile or stipitate base, as well as at the apex, tending to be inflated distally, pale green to coppery tan or suffused with dark purple, 1.8-3.5(4) mm long, 1.5-2.3 mm wide. **Nerves:** Absent except on the margins. **Beaks:** Often slightly bent, entire, reddish black, 0.1-0.4 mm long.

ACHENES: Suborbicular or broadly ovoid to obovoid, normally lenticular or a few trigonous, minutely apiculate, light brown, 1.2-1.8 mm long, 0.9-1.5 mm wide. **Stigmas:** 2, sometimes 3.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: Locally abundant. Wet meadows and open slopes, lakeshores, and streambanks at **middle and upper elevations**. Southern British Columbia to California and eastward to Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado. Apparently missing from large parts of Nevada and Utah. **July-August.**

SIMILAR SPECIES: See appendix, table 3.