



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

Carex subnigricans Stacey
Dark alpine sedge

HABIT: Loosely to densely caespitose from long, creeping rhizomes; sod-forming. **Culms:** Stiff, 5-20 cm tall, exceeding the leaves, old sheaths persistent.

LEAVES: Clustered toward the base. **Blades:** Involute-filiform, slender, stiff and wiry, 10 cm long, 0.25-1.25 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Dorsally striate, glabrous or with slightly scaberulous margins, membranous to hyaline ventrally, truncate to shallowly concave at the mouth.

BRACTS: None.

SPIKES: Solitary, **androgynous**, oblong-lanceolate to narrowly elliptic or conic, light to dark brown or chestnut, 8-20 mm long, 3-6 mm thick, when immature the terminal **staminate** portion not easily distinguished from the lower **pistillate** portion; perigynia appressed-ascending.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Oblong-elliptic, acute to obtuse at the tip, about equaling the perigynia, thin and fragile, reddish brown to stramineous with the margins and tip tending to be paler and somewhat hyaline, 1-nerved or nearly nerveless.

PERIGYNIA: Rather numerous, lanceolate to ovate-lanceolate, slightly inflated but strongly distended by the achene, substipitate, thin-walled, glabrous, brown, pale or greenish at the base, 2.5-4.1 mm long, 0.9-2 mm wide. **Nerves:** Lacking or nearly so. **Beaks:** Short and tapering, obliquely cleft, obscurely hyaline at the tip.

ACHENES: Ovoid to obovoid, trigonous, 1.25 mm long, 0.75 mm wide; partially to nearly filling the perigynium; rachilla well-developed. **Stigmas:** 3.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: On moist, rocky slopes and in meadows at **high elevations** in the mountains. From Oregon through California, central Idaho, Utah (Tushar Mountains, Uinta Mountains, and Aquarius Plateau), and Wyoming. **June-August.**

SIMILAR SPECIES: See appendix, table 4.