
WETLAND SEDGES

& WHERE TO FIND THEM

VERNAL POOLOOZA 2026
JENNY ADKINS





JENNY ADKINS

- Director of Business Development & Marketing
- Professional Wetland Scientist
- Field Botanist
- Education & Outreach









TAXONOMY

- Kingdom: Plantae
- Division: Magnoliophyta (Flowering Plants)
- Class: Liliopsida (Monocotyledonae)
- Order: Poales (Graminoids)
- Family: Cyperaceae
- Genus: **Carex**
- Species: MANY

CYPERACEAE FAMILY

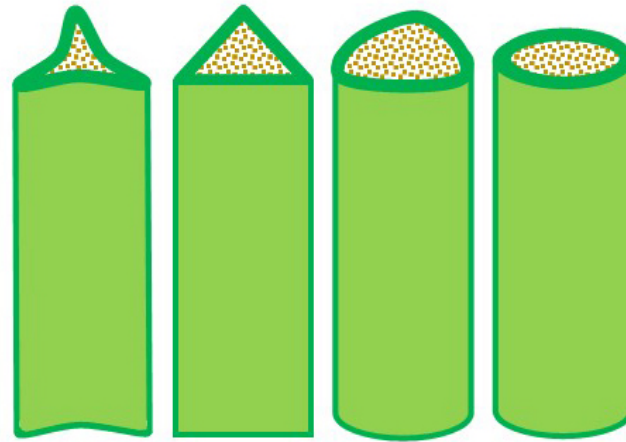
- *Abildgaardia*
- *Bolboschoenus* (Bulrush)
- *Bulbostylis* (Hairsedge)
- **Carex (Sedge)**
- *Cladium* (Twig-rush)
- *Cyperus* (Umbrella Sedge)
- *Dulichium* (Threeway Sedge)
- *Eleocharis* (Spikerush)
- *Eriophorum* (Cottonsedge)
- *Ficinia*
- *Fimbristylis* (Fimbry)
- *Fuirena* (Umbrella-sedge)
- *Isolepis* (Clubrush)
- *Rhynchospora* (Beakrush)
- *Schoenoplectiella* (Little Bulrush)
- *Schoenoplectus* (Bulrush)
- *Schoenus* (Blacksedge)
- *Scirpoides* (Round-headed Bulrush)
- *Scirpus* (Bulrush)
- *Scleria* (Nutsedge)
- *Trichophorum* (Deergrass)

- 3rd largest family of monocots (preceded by orchids and grass)
- 100 +/- genera with over 5,000 species worldwide
- 160 +/- *Carex* species in Ohio

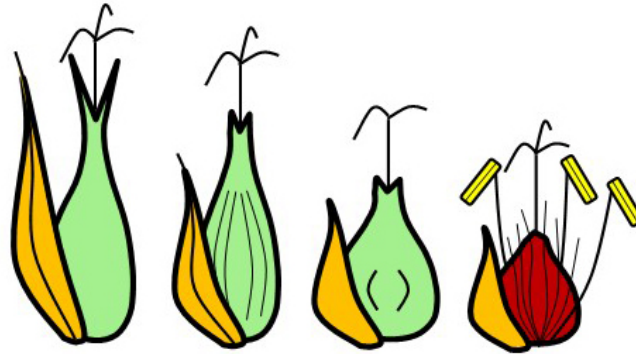




Sedges



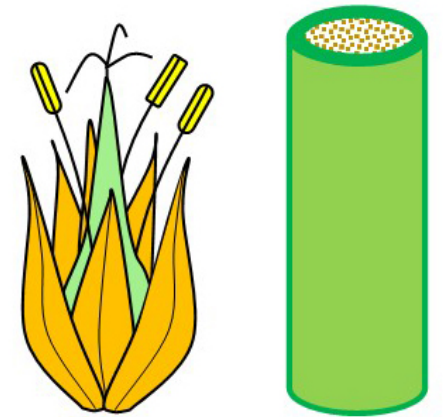
Stems triangular or round with pithy center.



1 scale under each flower or seed.

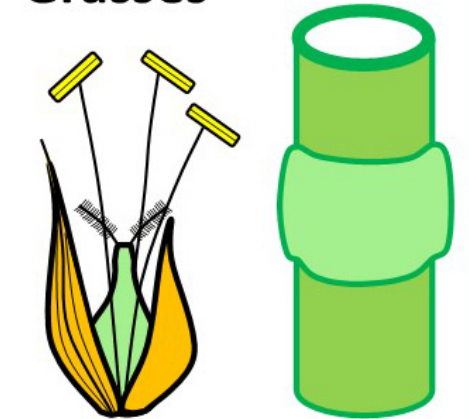
“Sedges have edges, rushes are round, grasses have joints, all the way to the ground.”

Rushes



6 scales surround each flower.
Stems round with pith.

Grasses



2 scales under each flower or seed. Stems round and hollow with nodes

GRAMINOID COMPARISON



Sedge
Cyperaceae



Rush
Juncaceae



Grass
Poaceae





Bulrush



Woolgrass

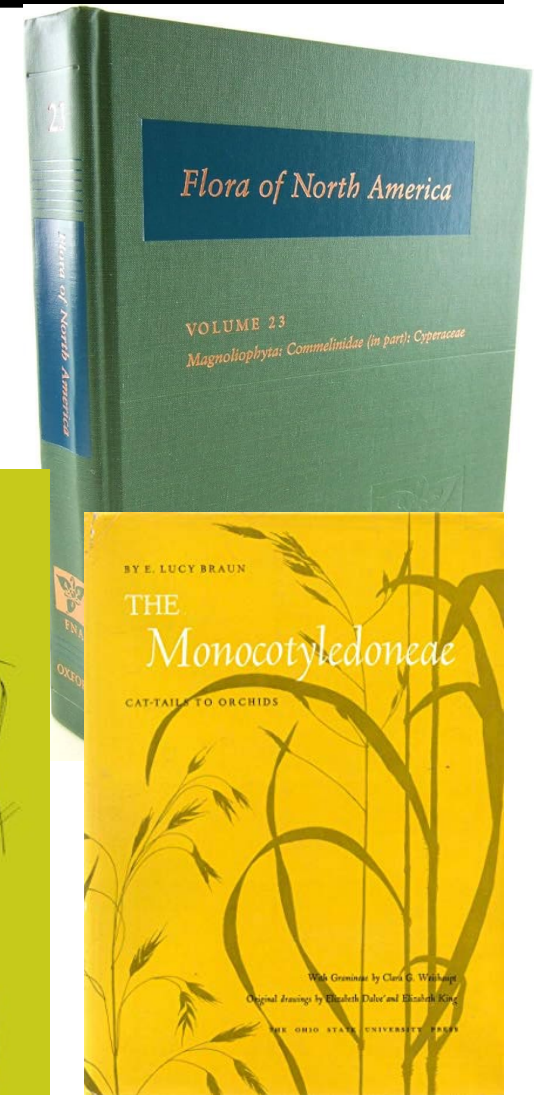
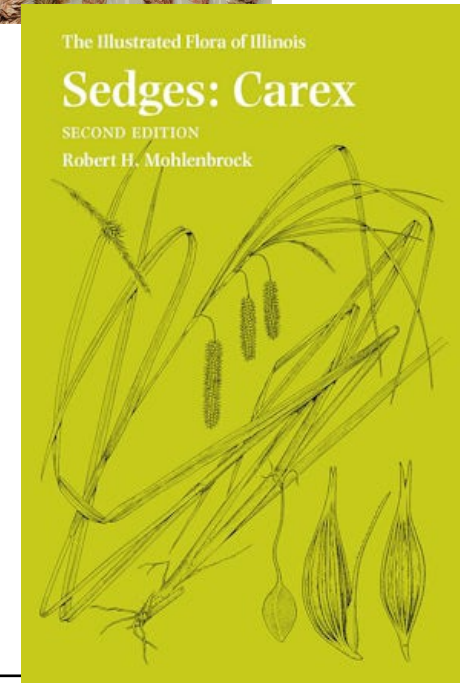
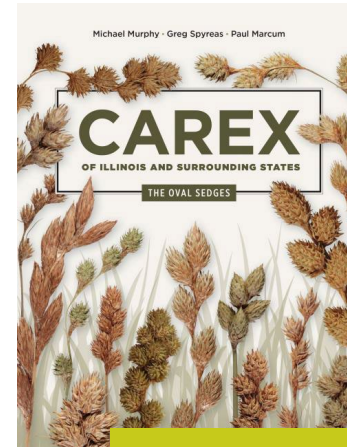


Broomsedge

BE WARY OF COMMON NAMES!

- Broomsedge = grass not sedge
- Woolgrass = sedge not grass
- Bulrush = sedge not rush

RESOURCES




Search for plants

Family

Plant Name

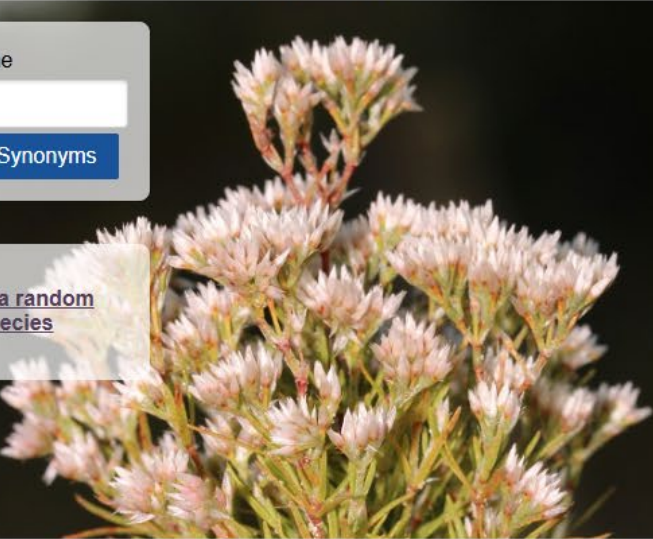
Habitat



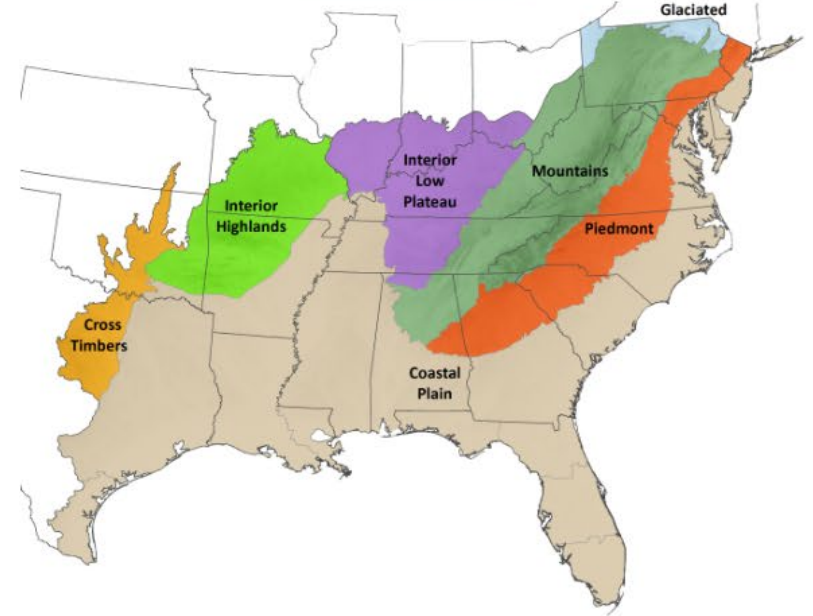
Search by synonym

Plant Name

[Show a random species](#)



The Flora Area



Flora Introduction

Key to keys

Major Keys

FSUS Data Versions



WETLAND SEDGES

Midwest/Northeast
Forests & Vernal
Pools

CAREX CONJUNCTA

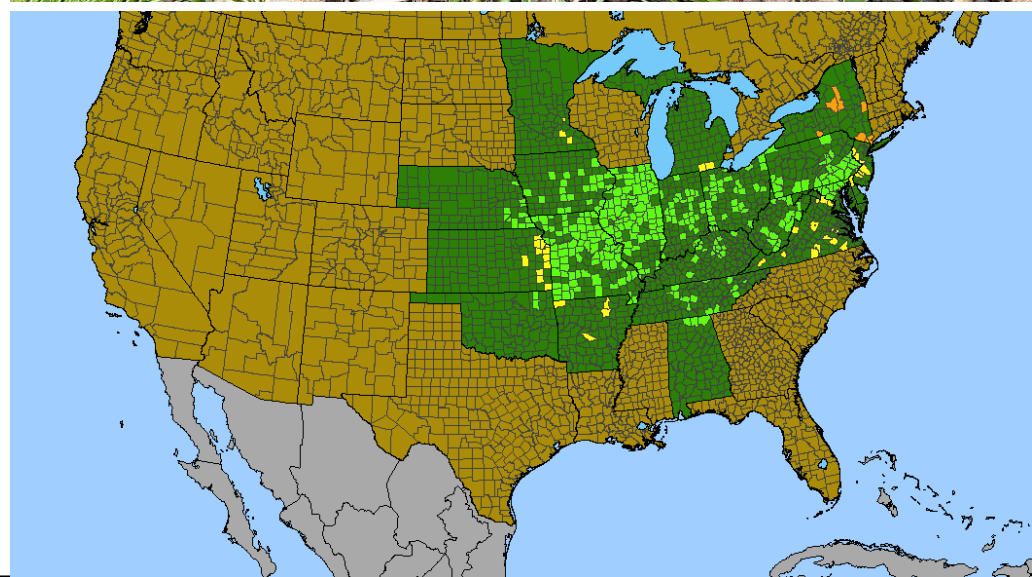
Soft Fox Sedge



CAREX CONJUNCTA

Soft Fox Sedge

- Section: Vulpinae
- Wetland Indicator Status: FACW
- C of C: 5
- Habitat: Bottomland forests, moist calcareous woodlands



CAREX CONJUNCTA



Spike



Culm



Perigynia



Perigynia, Scale, Achene

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX TRICHOCARPA

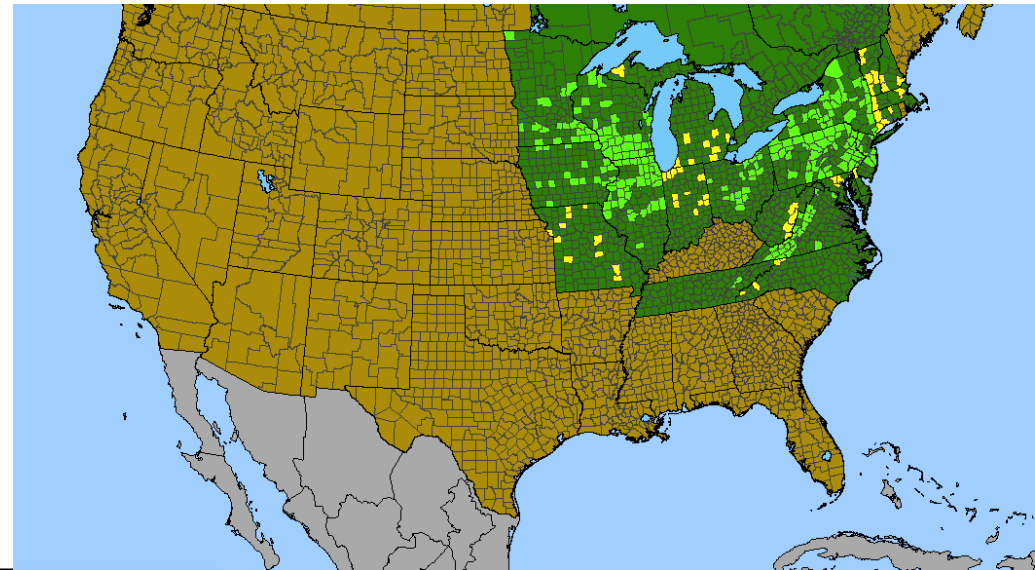
Hairy-fruited Sedge



CAREX TRICHOCARPA

Hairy-fruited Sedge

- Section: Carex
- Wetland Indicator Status: OBL
- C of C: 8
- Habitat: Bottomland forests, dappled shade, groundwater fed seeps and meadows



CAREX TRICHOCARPA

Spike



Culm- sheath



Ligule



Perigynia, Scale, Achene



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX GRACILLIMA

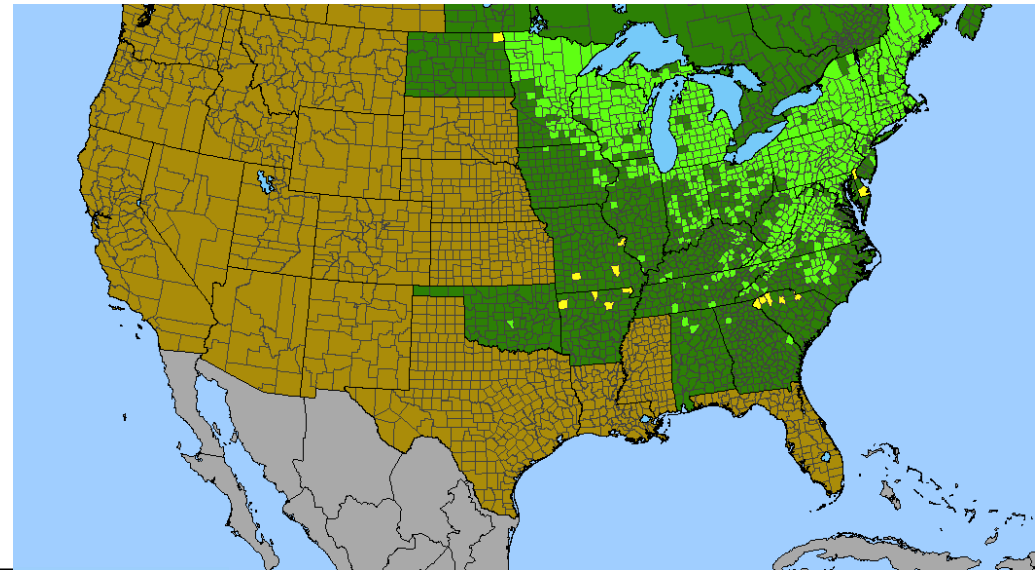
Graceful Sedge



CAREX GRACILLIMA

Graceful Sedge

- Section: Hymenochlaenae
- Wetland Indicator Status: FACU
- C of C: 4
- Habitat: Bottomland forests, floodplains, vernal pool hummocks, moist woodlands



CAREX GRACILLIMA

Spike



Culm- sheath



Perigynia, Scale, Achene



Basal Sheaths



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX TRIBULOIDES

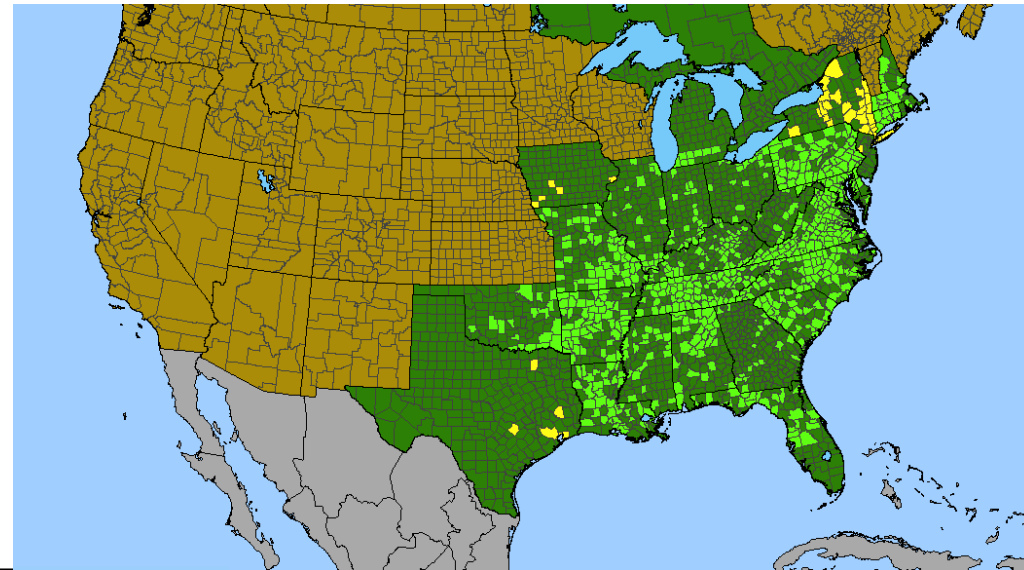
Blunt Broom Sedge



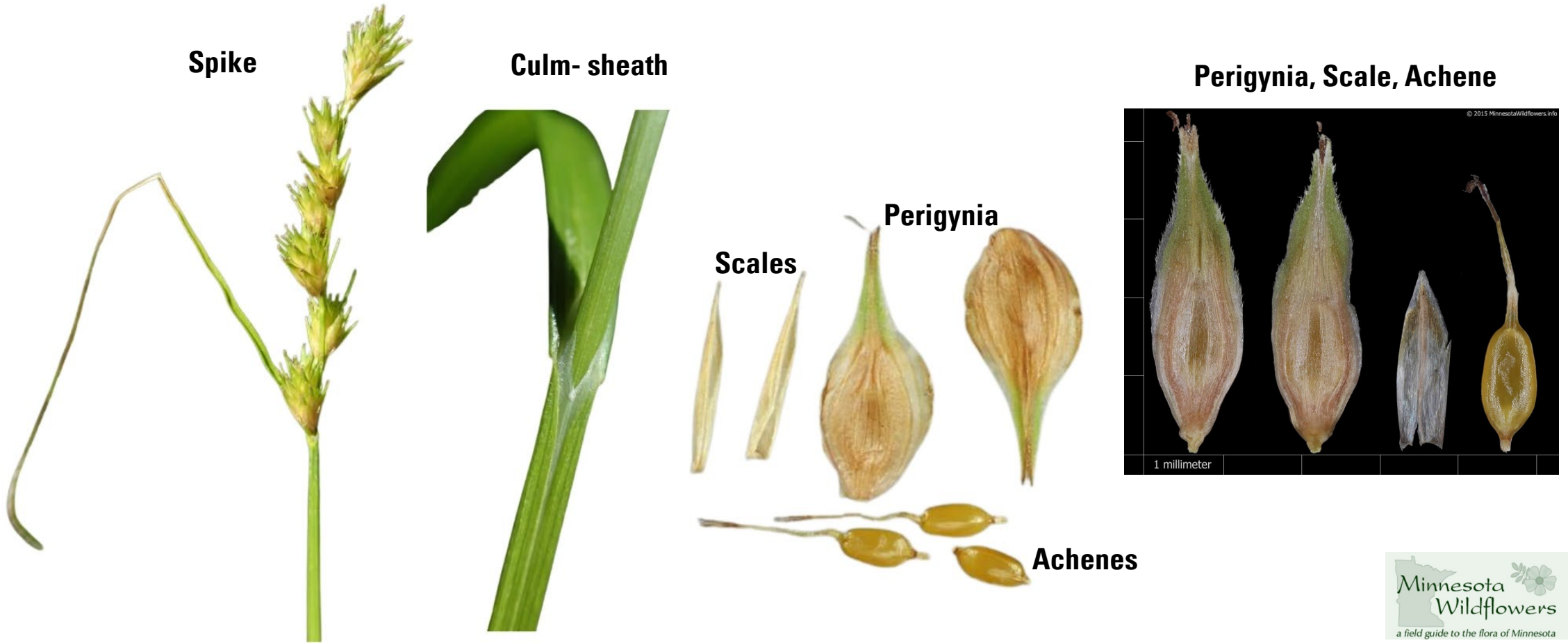
CAREX TRIBULOIDES

Blunt Broom Sedge

- Section: Ovales
- Wetland Indicator Status: OBL
- C of C: 4
- Habitat: Bottomland and swamp forests



CAREX TRIBULOIDES



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

SATURATED SOIL

CAREX GRAYI

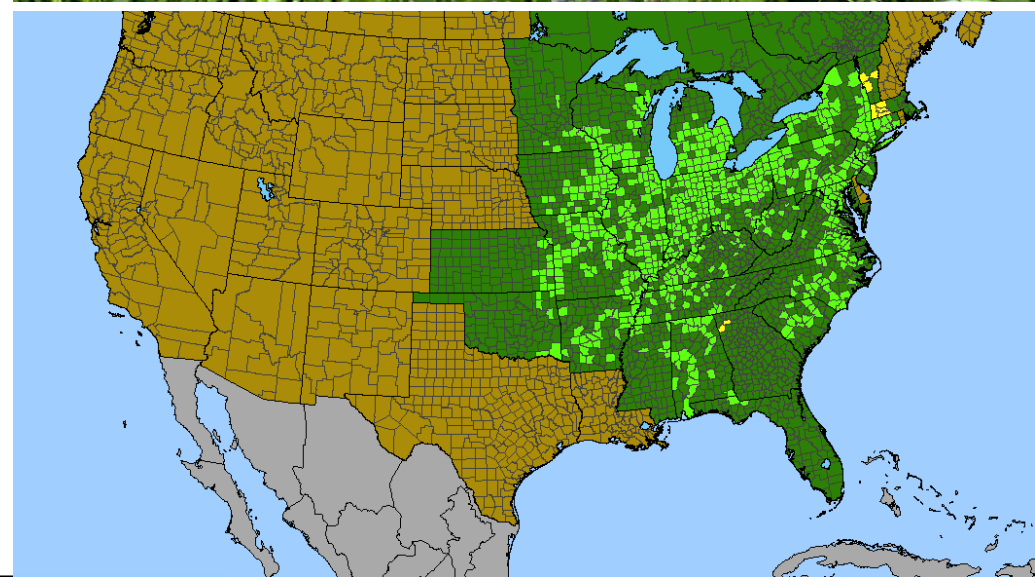
Gray's Sedge



CAREX GRAYI

Gray's Sedge

- Section: Lupulinae
- Wetland Indicator Status: FACW
- C of C: 5
- Habitat: Bottomland forests, vernal pools



CAREX GRAYI



Spike



Sheath



Ligule



Basal Sheath



Perigynia, Scale, Achene



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX LUPULINA

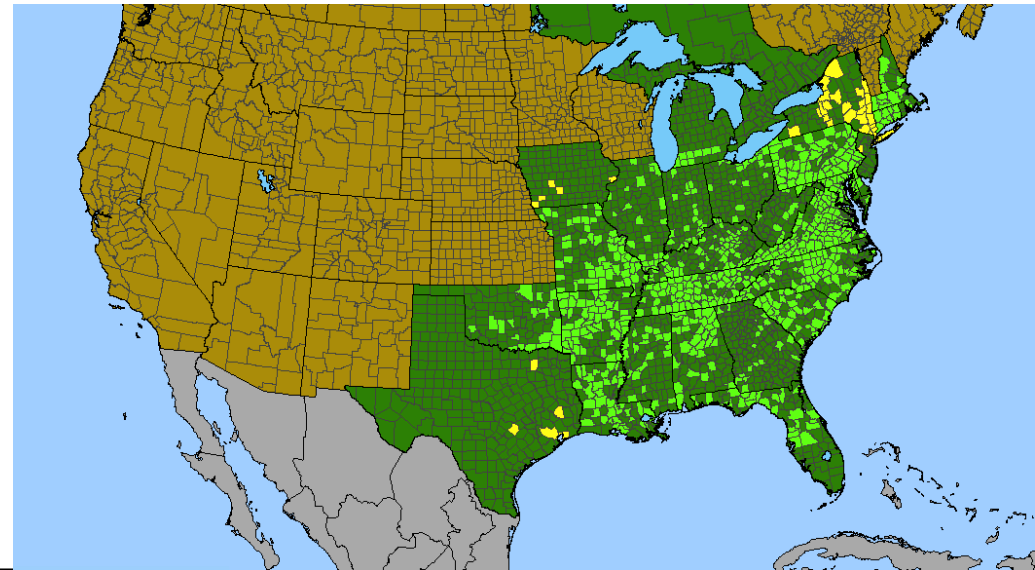
Hop Sedge



CAREX LUPULINA

Hop Sedge

- Section: Lupulinae
- Wetland Indicator Status: OBL
- C of C: 3
- Habitat: Bottomland forests, vernal pools, wet meadows



CAREX LUPULINA



Perigynia, Scale, Achene



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX RADIATA

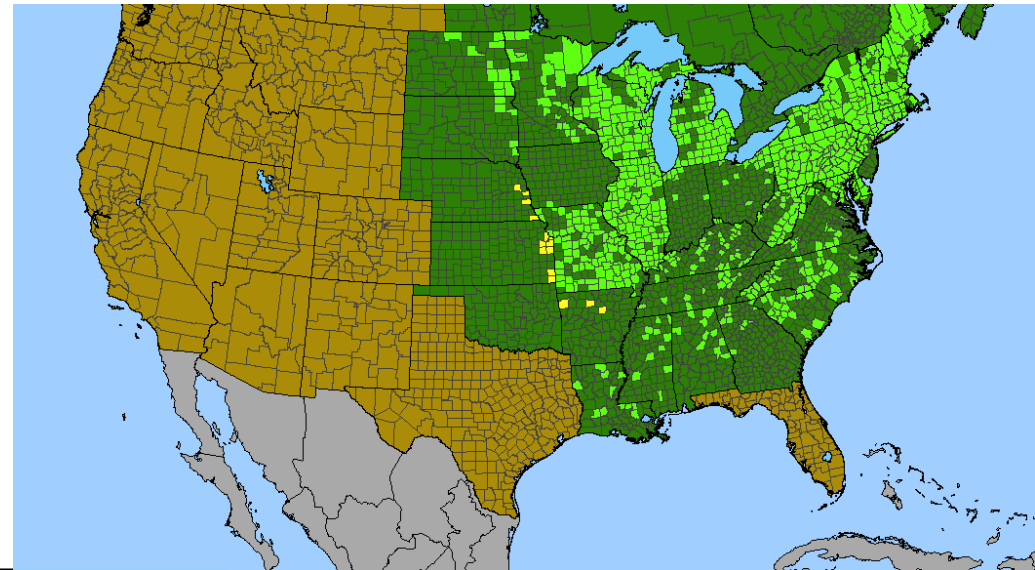
Eastern Star Sedge



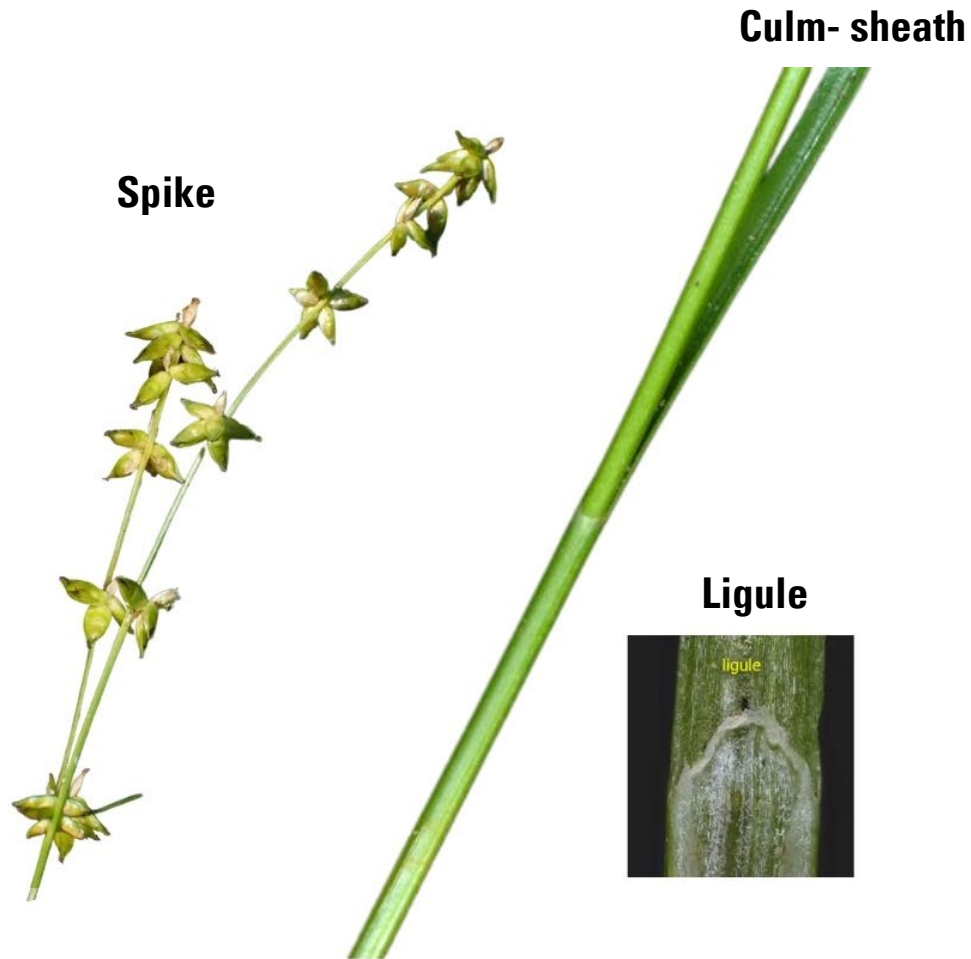
CAREX RADIATA

Eastern Star Sedge

- Section: Phaestoglochin
- Wetland Indicator Status: FAC
- C of C: 6
- Habitat: Bottomland forests, vernal pools



CAREX RADIATA



Perigynia, Scale, Achene



Perigynia



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX SQUARROSA

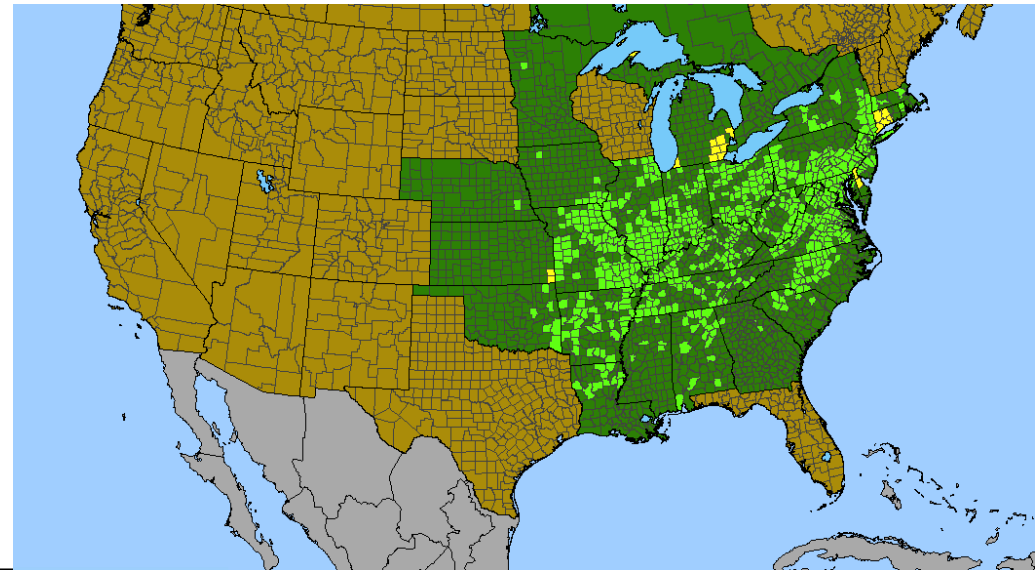
Squarrose Sedge



CAREX SQUARROSA

Squarrose Sedge

- Section: Squarrosae
- Wetland Indicator Status: OBL
- C of C: 4
- Habitat: Bottomland forests, vernal pools, marsh edges



CAREX SQUARROSA



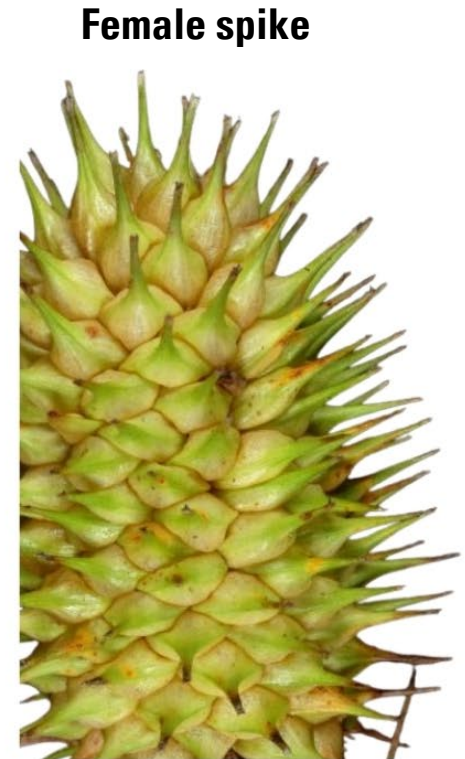
Spike



Culm- sheath



Perigynia



Female spike

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX BROMOIDES

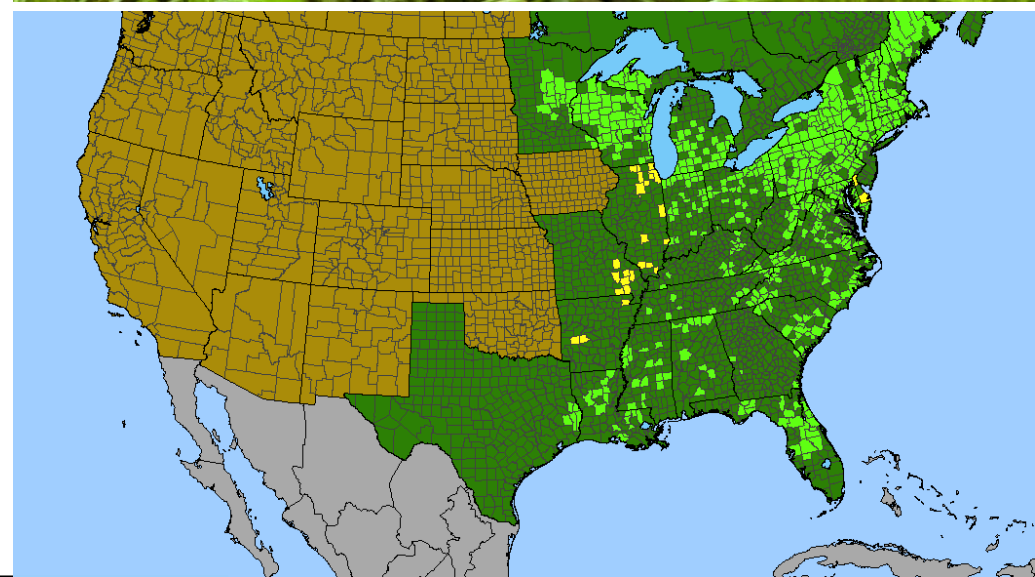
Brome-like Sedge



CAREX BROMOIDES

Brome-like Sedge

- Section: Deweyanae
- Wetland Indicator Status: FACW
- C of C: 7
- Habitat: Swamp forests, vernal pools



CAREX BROMOIDES

Spike



Culm- sheath



Ligule



Perigynia, Scale, Achene



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX CRINITA

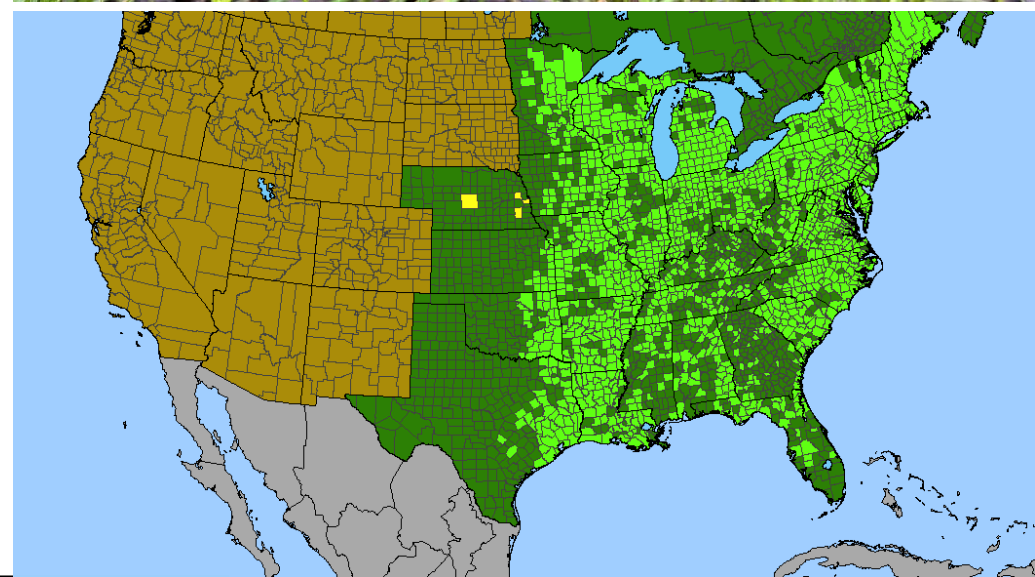
Fringed Sedge



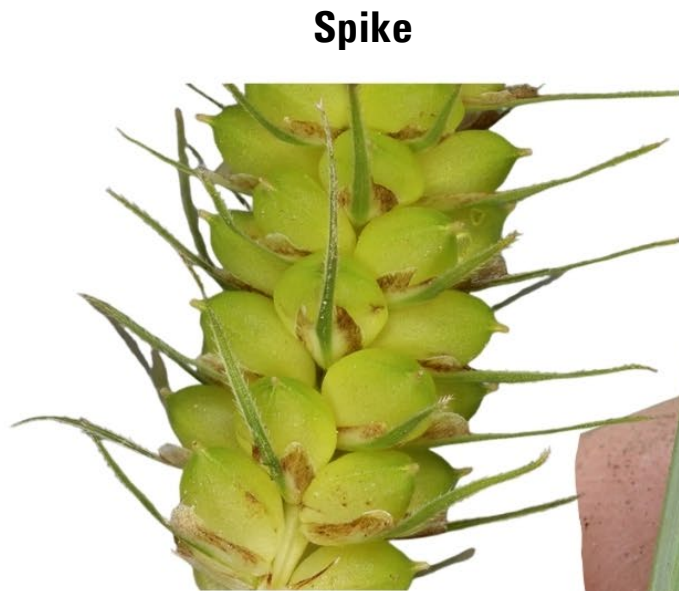
CAREX CRINITA

Fringed Sedge

- Section: Phacocystis
- Wetland Indicator Status: OBL
- C of C: 3
- Habitat: Bottomland and swamp forests, vernal pools



CAREX CRINITA



Spike



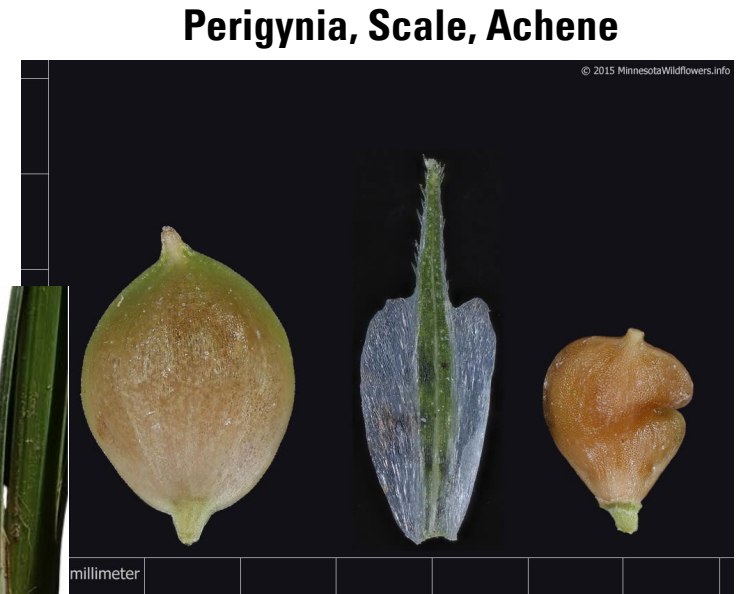
Sheath



Ligule



Basal Sheaths



Perigynia, Scale, Achene

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX STIPATA

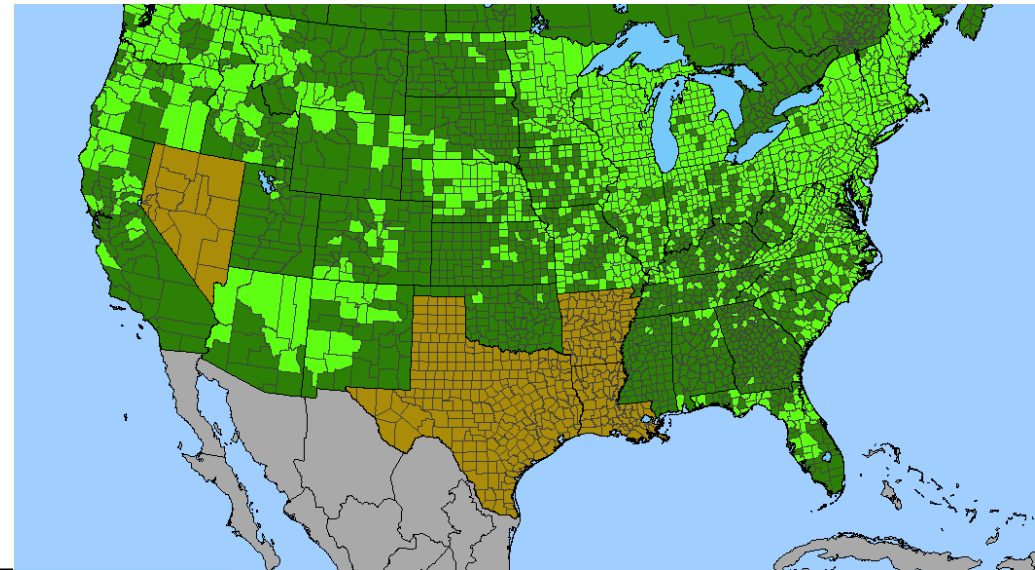
Awl-fruited Sedge



CAREX STIPATA

Awl-fruited Sedge

- Section: Vulpinae
- Wetland Indicator Status: OBL
- C of C: 2
- Habitat: Bottomland forests, vernal pools



CAREX STIPATA



Spike



Sheath

Ligule



Septate-nodulose sheath (back of sheath)



Perigynia & Scale



Perigynia, Scale, Achene



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

EXTRA SPECIALIZED SEDGES

CAREX CRUS- CORVI

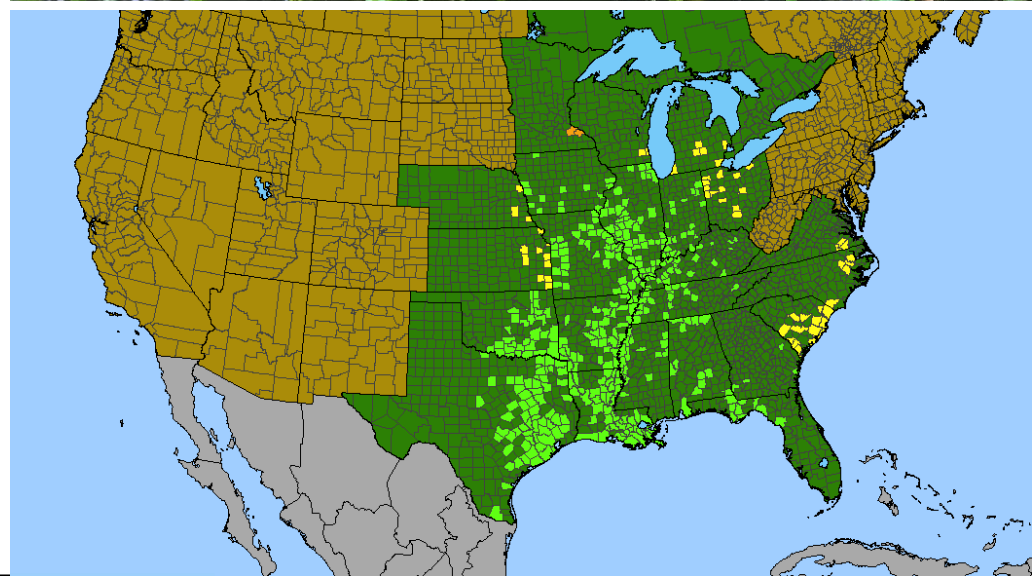
Raven's Foot Sedge



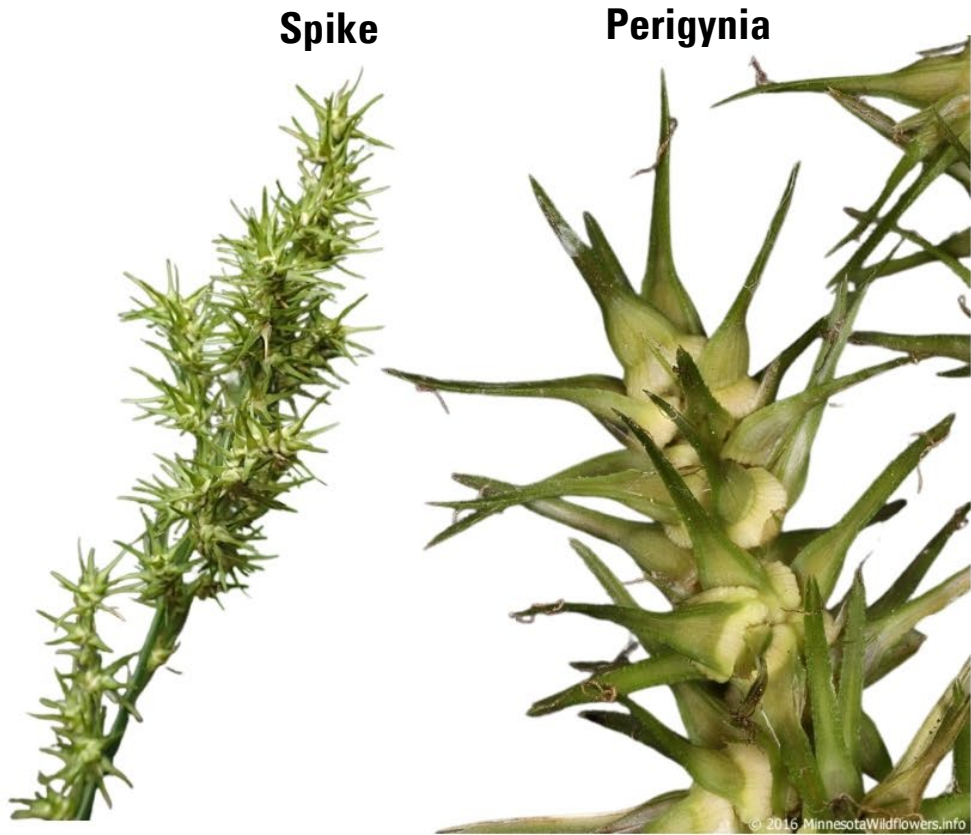
CAREX CRUS-CORVI

Raven's Foot Sedge

- Section: Vulpinae
- Wetland Indicator Status: OBL
- C of C: 8
- Habitat: Bottomland forests, moist woodland slopes



CAREX CRUS-CORVI



Perigynia, Scale, Achene



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX DECOMPOSITA

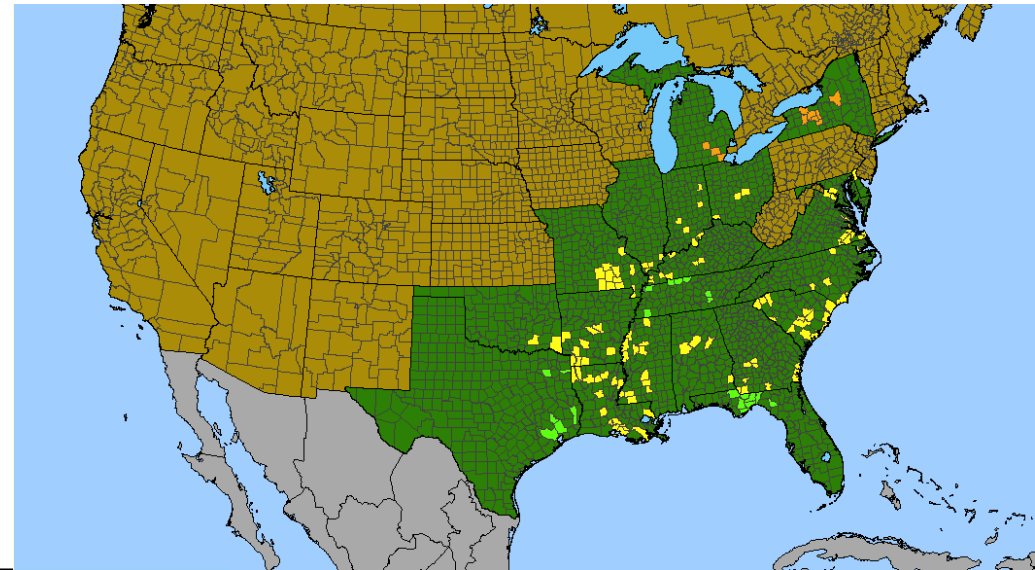
Cypress Knee Sedge



CAREX DECOMPOSITA

Cypress Knee Sedge

- Section: Heleoglochin
- Wetland Indicator Status: OBL
- C of C: 10
- Habitat: Swamp forests, vernal pools.
Specifically on pneumatophores and fallen logs
in water





CAREX DECOMPOSITA



Spike

Sheath



Perigynia & Scales

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

CAREX LUPULIFORMIS

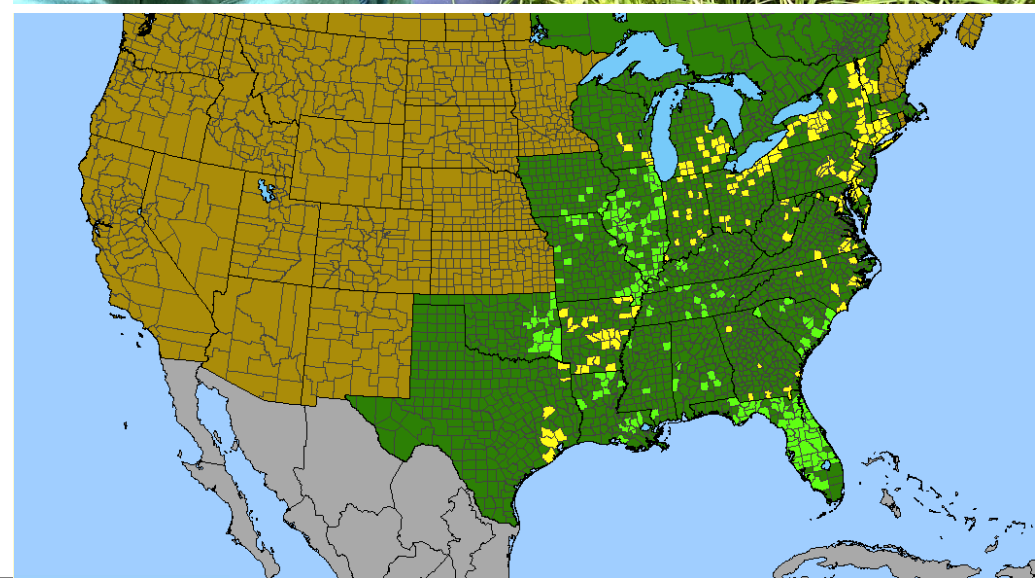
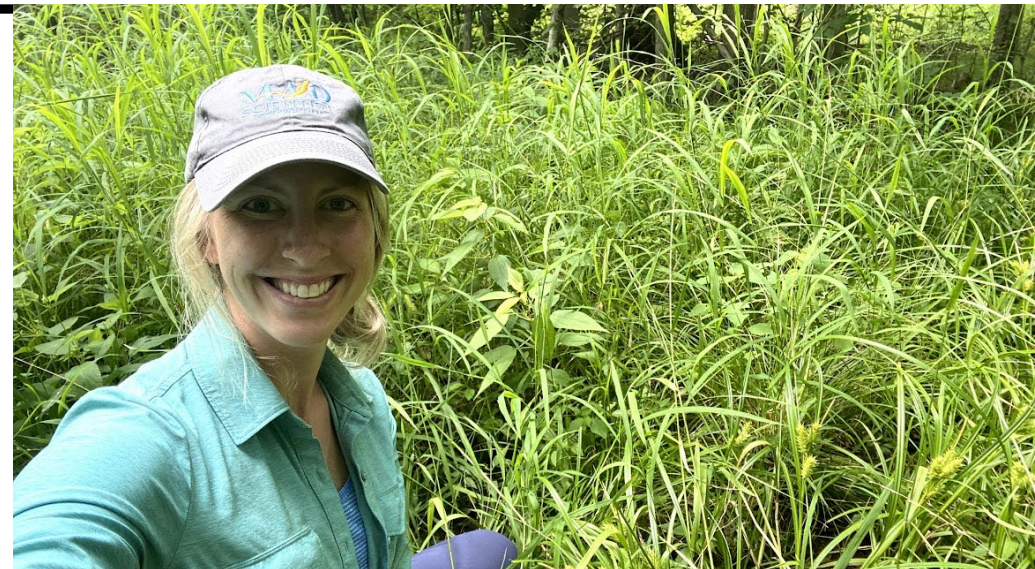
False Hop Sedge



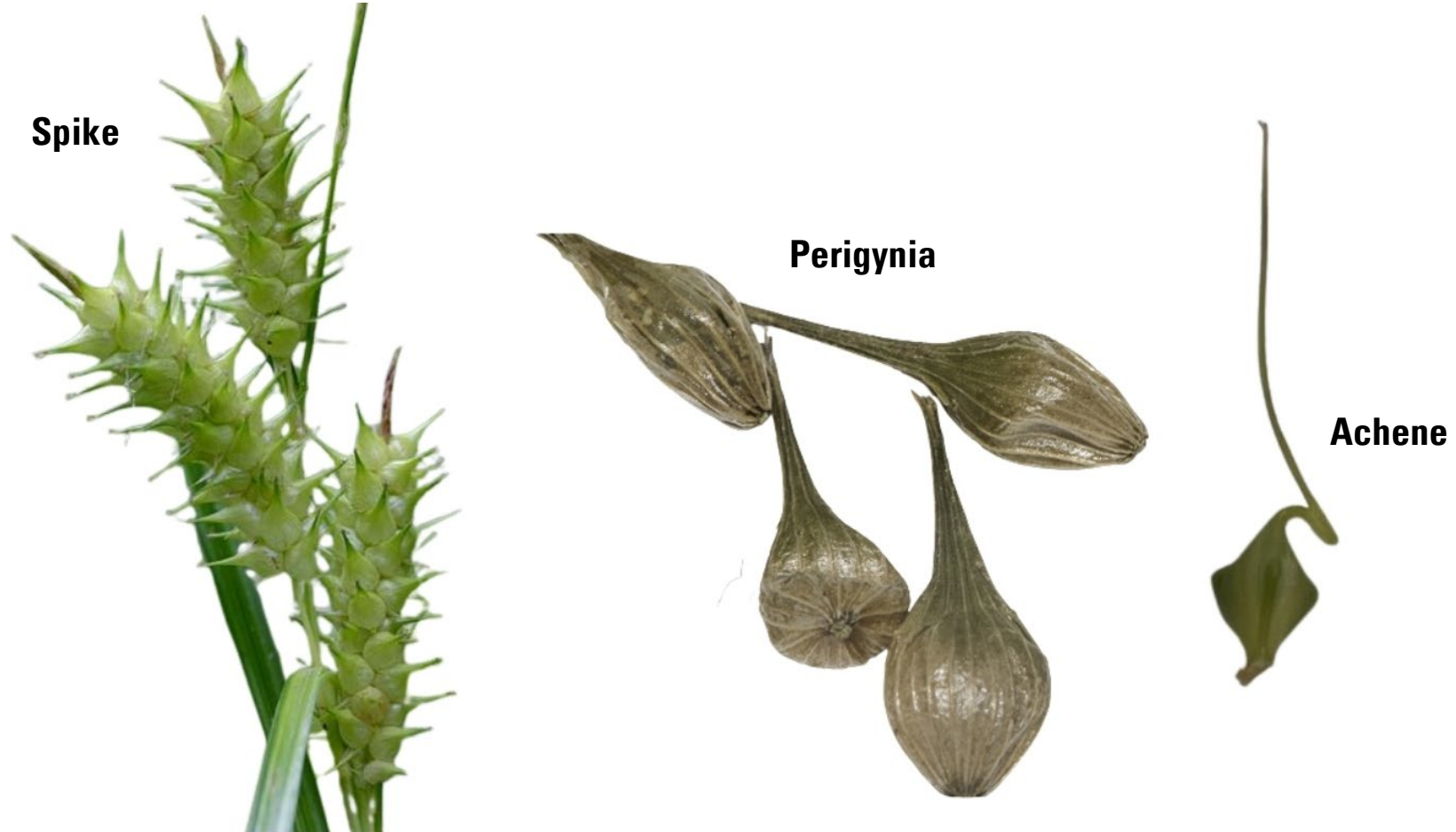
CAREX LUPULIFORMIS

False Hop Sedge

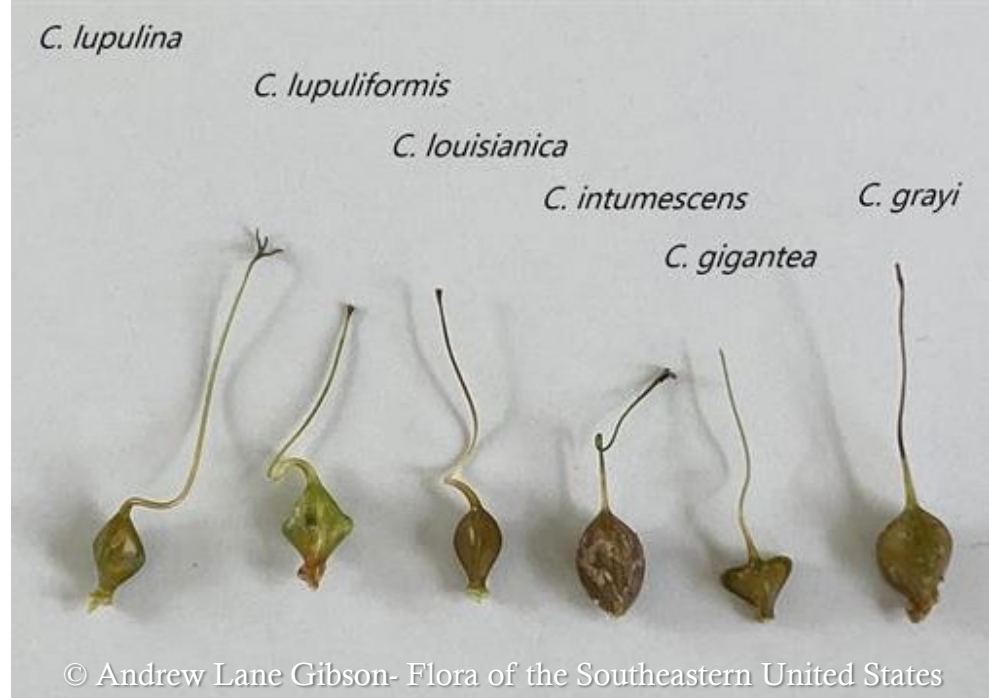
- Section: Lupulinae
- Wetland Indicator Status: OBL
- C of C: 9
- Habitat: Swamp forests, vernal pools, riverbanks



CAREX LUPULIFORMIS



KEY CHARACTERISTICS



CAREX JUNIPERORUM

Juniper Sedge



CAREX JUNIPERORUM

Juniper Sedge

- Section: Phyllostachyae
- Wetland Indicator Status: UPL
- C of C 10
- Habitat: Dry cedar barrens and alvars (limestone-based substrate)

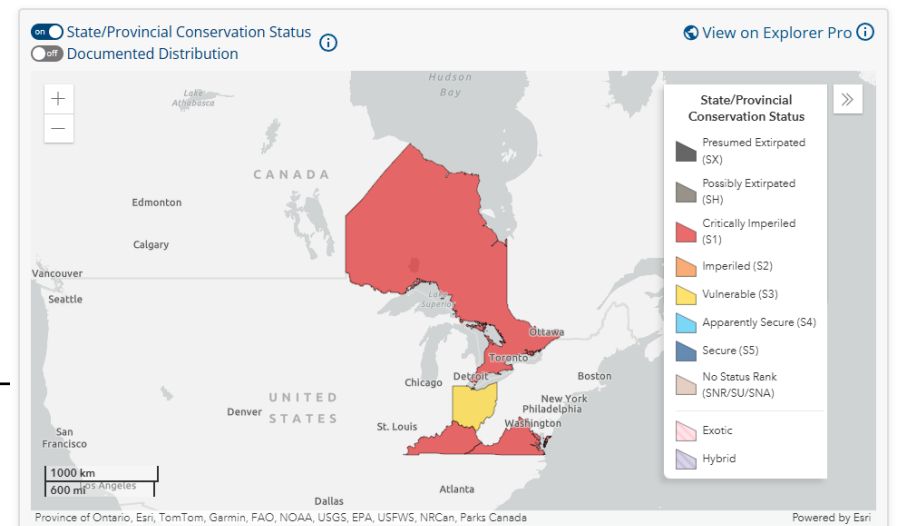


Carex juniperorum
Juniper Sedge

G3 Vulnerable

GX Presumed Extinct
GH Possibly Extinct
G1 Critically Imperiled
G2 Imperiled
G4 Apparently Secure
G5 Secure
No Status Rank

[New Search](#)





QUESTIONS

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