



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

***Carex cusickii* Mack.**
Cusick sedge

HABIT: One of the most grasslike sedges, more or less caespitose from creeping rhizomes. **Culms:** Sharply triangular, roughened on the angles above, 3-12 dm tall, exceeding the leaves, **aphyllopodic**.

LEAVES: Loosely clustered near base. **Blades:** Flat with revolute margins, 2.5-6 mm wide. **Sheaths:** More or less septate-nodulose dorsally, red-dotted and often cross-corrugated ventrally, concave and copper colored at the mouth; older sheaths reddish-ribbed ventrally.

BRACTS: Small, inconspicuous, scarcely different from the pistillate scales.

SPIKES: Small, sessile, numerous, **androgynous**; inflorescence compound, grasslike, brown, 3.5-8 cm long, 1-2 cm wide; lower spike clusters separate; upper spike clusters aggregated; staminate flowers inconspicuous; perigynia spreading at maturity.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Ovate-triangular with an acute tip, brown with hyaline margins and lighter-colored midvein that is sometimes excurrent, equaling the perigynia, largely concealing and falling with them.

PERIGYNIA: Ovate to lance-ovate, biconvex or plano-convex, strongly spongy-thickened and truncate at the base, sharp-edged, coriaceous, glossy, substipitate, light brown with green margins to brownish black at maturity, 2-4 mm long, 1.1-2 mm wide. **Nerves:** Few dorsally, often obscurely nerved toward the base ventrally. **Beaks:** Abruptly narrowed, less than half the length of the body, coarsely-serrulate-margined, shallowly bidentate; dorsal suture prominent distally.

ACHENES: Suborbicular to obovoid, lenticular, substipitate, brownish at maturity, 1-1.8 mm long, 0.8-1.2 mm wide, jointed to the style. **Stigmas:** 2.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: Infrequent in wet meadows and along borders of ponds and slow streams. **Sea level to moderate elevations.** British Columbia to coastal California, central Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and perhaps in Utah. **May-August.**

SIMILAR SPECIES: *C. cusickii*—Inflorescence a compound grasslike head; perigynium usually plano-convex with a long, ill-defined beak, and sometimes with a pair of veins bordering a concave median strip on the dorsal side, the latter a characteristic of *C. diandra*. *C. diandra*—Head not compound or less obviously compound; perigynium usually unequally biconvex; beak short; well-defined; dorsal suture covered by a flap.