



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

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*Carex flava* L.  
Yellow sedge

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**HABIT:** Densely cespitose from very short rhizomes. **Culms:** Stiff, somewhat fibrillose at the base, 1-8 dm tall, exceeding the leaves, **phyllopodic**.

**LEAVES:** 4-8, clustered toward the base. **Blades:** Flat or channeled, 2-5.5 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Dull white ventrally, truncate at the mouth.

**BRACTS:** Lowest leaflike, erect, divergent, exceeding the inflorescence; sheaths of lower bracts variable, 2-20 mm long; upper bracts often sheathless and reduced.

**SPIKES:** 3-6, greenish brown to yellowish brown, sessile or short-pedunculate. **Terminal: Staminate** linear, 0.5-2.4 cm long, 2-3 mm wide, pedunculate. **Lateral: Pistillate**, short-oblong to suborbicular, 5-18 mm long, 7-12 mm wide; the lower pedunculate, contiguous or more or less separate, the uppermost nearly sessile; perigynia crowded in several to many rows, widely spreading to deflexed.

**PISTILLATE SCALES:** Ovate to ovate-lanceolate with an acute to cuspidate tip, narrower and shorter than the perigynia, reddish with a pale, 3-nerved center and slender, hyaline margins.

**PERIGYNIA:** Obovoid, falcate little inflated, punctulate, yellowish green, becoming more yellow with age, 3.5-6.2 mm long, 1.25-2 mm wide.

**Nerves:** Several to many, conspicuous. **Beaks:** Conic, slender, reddish-tinged, serrulate, abruptly contracted, deflexed, 1.4-2.3 mm long; teeth bidentate.

**ACHENES:** Obpyramidal, trigonous, abruptly tapered to the base, truncated at the apex, yellow brown at maturity, 1.2-1.6 mm long, 1 mm wide. **Stigmas:** 3.

**HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION:** Wet, usually sandy meadows, sometimes on calcareous soils **at low to mid elevations**. Circumboreal. In North America from British Columbia to Newfoundland, south to central Idaho and Montana (Yellowstone National Park), and east through Indiana to New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Rather rare in Idaho. **June-August**.

**SIMILAR SPECIES:** *C. flava*—Plants generally taller (1-8 dm tall); perigynia larger, (3.5-6.2 mm long, 1.25-2 mm wide) with longer beak, (1.4-2.3 mm long), widely spreading to deflexed. *C. oederi*—Plants shorter (0.6-4 dm tall); perigynia smaller, (2.3-5 mm long, 0.9-1.5 mm wide) with shorter beaks (0.8-1.1 mm long), crowded, spreading.