



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

***Carex lanuginosa* Michx.**
Woolly sedge

SYNONYM: *C. pellita* Muhl.

HABIT: Stems arising singly or few together from well-developed, creeping rhizomes. **Culms:** Stiff, erect, sharply triangular, dark red at the base, 3-11 dm tall, often shorter than the leaves, **aphyllopodic**.

LEAVES: 2-5, borne well above the base. **Blades:** Flat with revolute margins, dull green, 2-5 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Wine red-tinged and deeply concave at the mouth; the lower sheaths breaking and becoming cross-filamentose.

BRACTS: Leafy, sheathless or very short-sheathing, equaling or slightly exceeding the inflorescence.

SPIKES: Several, elongate, brown or greenish to reddish purple. **Terminal: Staminate**, slender, peduncled, 2-5 cm long, often closely subtended by 1 or 2 shorter, sessile staminate spikes. **Lateral:** 2-3, **pistillate**, oblong-cylindric, closely many-flowered, rather remote, 1-5 cm long, 5-8 mm wide; perigynia widely spreading, sessile or the lowest one on an erect, slender peduncle.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Lanceolate, long-acuminate or mucronate at the tip with a densely hairy awn, somewhat ciliate, narrower and often shorter than the perigynia, reddish brown with a broad 3-nerved green or pale center and hyaline margins.

PERIGYNIA: Broadly ovoid or broadly ellipsoid, suborbicular in cross section, somewhat inflated, rounded at the sessile base, somewhat spongy, thick-walled, coriaceous, densely short-hairy, brownish green to reddish brown, often paler toward the base, (2.5)3-5 mm long, 1.5-2 mm wide. **Nerves:** Numerous, hidden by the pubescence. **Beaks:** 0.5-1.5 mm long, deeply bidentate, forked.

ACHENES: Broadly obovoid, trigonous with slightly concave to roundish sides and blunt angles, yellowish brown to medium brown, 1.5-2 mm long, 1-1.5 mm wide. **Stigmas:** 3.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: Common and widespread along streambanks and in wet meadows, swamps, and other wet places, sometimes in shallow water, also on somewhat dry ground. From **lowlands to moderate elevations** in the mountains. Alaska to New Brunswick, south to California, New Mexico, and Tennessee. Occurring in appropriate habitats throughout the Intermountain area. **April-August.**

SIMILAR SPECIES: *C. lanuginosa*—Culms sharply triangular; leaves flat; ligules long and membranous; perigynium beak forked. *C. lasiocarpa*—Culms obtusely triangular; leaves inrolled or folded; ligules short, thick, tough; perigynium beak bidentate, but usually not forked.