



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

Carex paysonis Clokey
Payson sedge

HABIT: Culms borne singly or few together from sparse, coarse, creeping rhizomes. **Culms:** Stiffly erect, sharply triangular, brownish-tinged, becoming fibrous at the base, 1-5 dm tall, exceeding the leaves, **aphyllopodic**.

LEAVES: 8-15, clustered near the base. **Blades:** Firm, flat, 2-8 mm wide with a slight bluish cast. **Sheaths:** Short, thin and fragile, yellowish-tinged, truncate to concave at the mouth.

BRACTS: The lower 1 or 2 leaflike, sheathless, dark-auricled, equaling or shorter than the inflorescence; the upper reduced.

SPIKES: 2-6, erect, sessile, or the lower pedunculate and nodding, stout. **Terminal: Staminate** or occasionally **androgynous**, linear or narrowly oblong, 1.5-3.25 mm long, 3-4.5 mm wide. **Lateral:** 3-5, **pistillate** or **androgynous**, erect, cylindrical to oblong, 0.5-2.5 cm long, 4-6 mm wide, approximate or remote, densely flowered; perigynia appressed-ascending.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Ovate to ovate-lanceolate, acute to acuminate, equaling or somewhat shorter and narrower than the perigynia, dark reddish brown with a pale midrib.

PERIGYNIA: Broadly elliptic, elliptic-ovate, or subrotund, flattened (when pressed) or inflated, contracted at the apex, thin-walled, glabrous or finely papillate, pale or partly to wholly purplish, 2-4.3 mm long, 1.5-2.2 mm wide. **Nerves:** Few, prominent to obscure or absent on both surfaces. **Beaks:** Abrupt, shallowly or scarcely bidentate, 0.2-0.5 mm long.

ACHENES: Trigonous, sessile or nearly so, 1.2-1.7 mm long, 1 mm wide, brown, much narrower and shorter than the perigynia. **Stigmas:** 3.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: Common in moist meadows and on open, often rocky slopes at **high elevations**. Northeastern Oregon through central Idaho, eastern Nevada, Utah (Uinta Mountains), and Wyoming. **June-August**.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *C. paysonis*—Terminal spike staminate or with a few perigynia at the base; perigynia ascending, inflated (fresh material), coarse-nerved, thin-walled. *C. raynoldsii*—Terminal wholly staminate; perigynia spreading-ascending and not as inflated, striately nerved with thick, tough walls. The perigynia of *C. raynoldsii* appear plump and conspicuous in the inflorescence. The achenes (1.8-2.5 mm long, 1.1-1.7 mm wide) are much larger than those of *C. paysonis* (1.2-1.7 mm long, 1 mm wide) and usually fill most of the perigynium cavity (except for the flat distal margins).