



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

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***Carex retrorsa* Schwein.**  
**Knot-sheath sedge, retrorse sedge**

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**HABIT:** Densely clustered on very short rhizomes. **Culms:** Stout, stiff, obtusely triangular below, sharply triangular distally, 2-10 dm tall, much exceeded by the upper leaves and bracts, **aphyllopodic**.

**LEAVES:** 4-7. **Blades:** Thin, but firm, flat, septate-nodulose, 3-10 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Long, loose, prolonged at the truncate summit; lower sheaths becoming cross-filamentose.

**BRACTS:** Leaflike, more or less sheathing, several times longer than the inflorescence.

**SPIKES:** Several, sessile or short-peduncled, at least the upper ones crowded. **Terminal: Staminate**, linear, 1-4, often with a few perigynia at the middle or below, 2-4 cm long, 2-4 mm wide, lateral ones smaller. **Lateral: Pistillate** or androgynous, 3-8, erect, upper ones aggregated, lower one sometimes separate, oblong-cylindric to short-oblong, 1.5-8 cm long, 14-20 mm wide, densely flowered; perigynia green, becoming yellowish or stramineous, the upper widely spreading, the middle and lower usually deflexed.

**PISTILLATE SCALES:** Lanceolate with an acute or cuspidate tip, yellowish brown or reddish brown with a 3-nerved green center, shorter to equal in length, but much narrower than the perigynia.

**PERIGYNIA:** Ellipsoid or lance-ovoid, much inflated, rounded at the base, somewhat obliquely narrowed at the apex, membranous, glabrous, shining, yellowish green or becoming light brownish-tinged, 7-10 mm long. **Nerves:** 8-12 on each side, coarse, riblike, obscure or absent on the margins. **Beaks:** Slender, conic, smooth, 2-3.5 mm long, bidentate; teeth stiff, erect.

**ACHENES:** Oblong-obovoid with blunt angles, trigonous, granular, brown, 1.9-2.5 mm long, 1.25 mm wide, continuous with the persistent, contorted or bent, bony style. **Stigmas:** 3.

**HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION:** Rare or infrequent. Wet meadows, bogs, swamps, and edges of streams, lakes, and rivers. **Foothills and lowlands.** British Columbia to Quebec and south to Washington, north-eastern Oregon, Idaho (northern Snake River Plain), Utah (Weber County), Wyoming, Colorado, and New Jersey. **July-September.**

**SIMILAR SPECIES:** See appendix, table 11.