



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

Carex xerantica Bailey
Dryland sedge

HABIT: Tufted without creeping rhizomes. **Culms:** Stiff, erect, 3-7 dm tall, exceeding the leaves, **aphyllopodic**.

LEAVES: 2-3, somewhat crowded toward the base. **Blades:** Stiff, firm, 1.5-3 mm wide. **Sheaths:** Membranous-hyaline ventrally, truncate to concave or occasionally V-shaped at the mouth and occasionally prolonged above the collar.

BRACTS: Sheathless, inconspicuous or the lowest setaceous-prolonged, shorter than the inflorescence.

SPIKES: 3-6, green to medium brown, **gynaecandrous**, sessile, approximate but distinct, usually forming a stiff, elongate head 2-5 cm long; the first two internodes each 3-18 mm long; perigynia closely appressed or ascending.

PISTILLATE SCALES: Ovate, varying from shorter and narrower than the perigynia to more often nearly concealing them, thin, stiff with an acuminate tip, light reddish brown with a green or pale-nerved center and white-hyaline margins.

PERIGYNIA: Ovate, flat to slightly or strongly plano-convex or concavo-convex, abruptly tapering to the base, gradually tapering at the apex, **wing**-margined to the base and serrulate to below the middle, 3.7-7 mm long, 1.6-2.8 mm wide, greenish, stramineous, or pale brown with a reddish brown tip. **Nerves:** Usually 10 or more on each side or nearly absent ventrally. **Beaks:** Flattened, strongly margined and serrulate to the tip, obliquely cleft and minutely bidentate, 2.2-3.6 mm long; dorsal suture often extending halfway or more down the length of the beak, margins of the flap slightly hyaline.

ACHENES: Quadrate-orbicular, lenticular or slightly plano-convex, 1.7-2.6 mm long, 1.1-1.75 mm wide. **Stigmas:** 2.

HABITAT AND DISTRIBUTION: Infrequently collected in grasslands and prairies and on open slopes at **higher elevations**. From Alberta east to Manitoba and south to the high plateaus of Utah, Arizona, and Colorado. **June-August.**

SIMILAR SPECIES: See appendix, table 10.