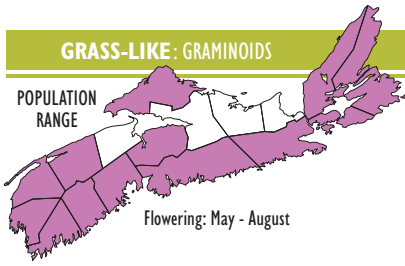


Atlantic Sedge & Howe's Sedge

Carex atlantica

GRASS-LIKE: GRAMINOIDS

POPULATION RANGE



Flowering: May - August

SIZE: 10-110 cm tall.

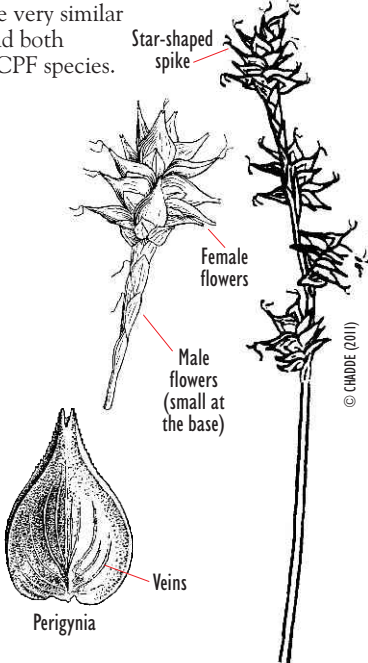
LEAVES: Very narrow and elongate, 3.5-25 cm long, and located along the bottom third of the stem.

STEM: Triangular, mostly erect and often with rough edges along the upper section. They often form dense clumps.

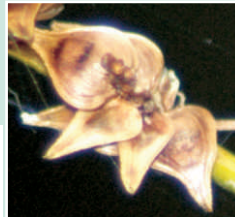
FLOWERS: Arranged in 2-8 irregularly star-shaped spikes (clusters) at the top of the stem. Each spike is attached directly to the stem (not stalked) and contains a large number of male and female flowers. The total length of the flower cluster (inflorescence) is 0.8 to 4.5 cm.

FRUITS: Small, dry, one-seeded fruits (achenes) that are enclosed by a specialized sac-like covering called the perigynia. The perigynia is green or brown with several veins, broad at the base, narrows to a point at the tip, 2-3.5 mm long and 1-3 mm wide. The tip (beak) is sharply notched.

NOTES: Atlantic Sedge (*Carex atlantica* ssp. *atlantica*) and Howe's Sedge (*Carex atlantica* ssp. *capillacea*) are very similar and both ACPF species.

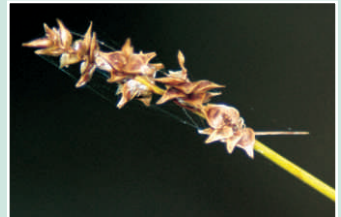


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Perigynia

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Habitat:

Bogs, peaty barrens, and acidic, open, forested swamps.

Interesting point: There are an estimated 2000 *Carex* species worldwide and nearly 500 in North America. It represents by far the most diverse plant genus in Canada. The study of *Carex* is known as caricology.

Similar species: Sedges represent the largest group of vascular plant species in NS, with over 115 in the province. They are distinguished mostly by their height, leaves, and the size and shape of the flower spikes. Inland Sedge (*Carex interior*), Little Prickly Sedge (*Carex echinata*) and Wiegand's Sedge (*Carex wiegandii*) are similar, but the broad-based and distinctly veined perigynia (and very thin leaves in the case of Howe's Sedge) are useful in distinguishing *Carex atlantica*.

Atlantic Sedge

Carex atlantica
ssp. *atlantica*

NS General Status Rank: Secure

☛☛ Distribution: NS, NB, ON

25-110 cm tall. It is more robust, has wider leaves (1.5-4.5 mm) and a longer flower cluster (1.8-4.5 cm long) with 3-8 spikes.

Howe's Sedge

Carex atlantica
ssp. *capillacea*

NS General Status Rank: Undetermined

☛☛ Distribution: NS, QC, ON

10-60 cm tall. It is a smaller and more slender species with narrower leaves (0.5-1.5 mm wide) and a shorter flower cluster (0.8-2 cm long) with 2-5 spikes.