

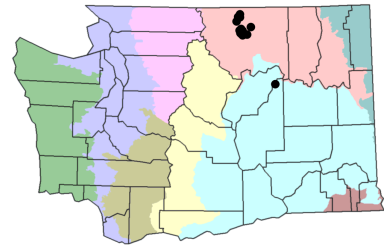
## ***Carex vallicola*** Dewey

valley sedge

Cyperaceae - sedge family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S2



**General Description:** Adapted from Flora of North America (1993+): Clustered perennial lacking conspicuous rhizomes; stems 12-60 cm tall, 0.5-1.3 mm wide. Widest leaf blades 1-3 mm wide.

**Floral Characteristics:** Spikes 5-10, sessile, crowded, 0.5-3 cm x 5-8 mm. Terminal spike androgynous. Female scales translucent or pale brown with green centers, veins 1-3, usually slightly shorter and narrower than the perigynia, tip pointed to short-awned. Perigynia 2-10 per spike, ascending, hairless, veinless or obscurely veined except for 7-15 veins on the lower dorsal side, brown, 3.3-4 x 1.8-2.3 mm, widest near the middle, spongy at the base. Beak 0.5-1 mm, with 2 teeth; margins smooth to minutely toothed. Stigmas 2. Flowers April to July.

**Fruits:** Achenes lenticular, 1.6-2.7 x 1.5-2 mm.

**Identification Tips:** The spikes of *C. vallicola* are small, few-flowered, and sessile; its female scales are usually shorter and narrower than the perigynia, making the perigynia easily visible. In contrast, *Carex hoodii* and *C. tumulicola* have female scales at least as long and wide as the perigynia, mostly hiding them.

**Range:** B.C., WA, ID, MT, SD, south to CA, AZ, NM, and Mexico.

**Habitat/Ecology:** Dry to moist slopes, grasslands, thickets, and open forest; often with sagebrush or aspen. In WA *C. vallicola* grows in dry meadows or treeless communities with sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*); it is often on gravelly loam in moist, concave microsites where the sagebrush is thickest. Other associates include Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), California brome (*Bromus carinatus*), sedges (*Carex* spp., especially *C. hoodii*), silky lupine (*Lupinus sericeus*), pinegrass (*Calamagrostis rubescens*), and larkspur (*Delphinium nuttallianum*). Elevations in WA: 600-2070 m (2000-6800 ft).

**Comments:** Almost all of the WA populations grow in an area of 16 x 35 km (10 x 22 mi.). Threats include off-road vehicles and overgrazing. *C. vallicola* is thought to be tolerant of moderate levels of cattle grazing. This taxon is also rare in B.C., MT, and CA.

**References:** Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 23.



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