

DEPARTMENT OF

Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Contact Us | Get Email/SMS Updates | News | Online Services | Sitemap

About DACF

Animals & Plants

Forest

Geology

Recreation

Farming

Planning

Licensing & Regulations

Bureaus & Programs

DACF Home → Bureaus & Programs → Maine Natural Areas Program → Communities, Plants, and Animals → Rare Plants → Carex oronensis

About MNAP
Focus Areas
Communities, Plants and Animals
Natural Communities and Ecosystems
Rare Plants
Invasive Plants
Ecological Inventory and Monitoring
Rare Animals
State and Global Rarity Ranks
Survey Forms
Maps, Data, and Technical Assistance
Ecological Reserves

Maine Natural Areas Program

Carex oronensis Fern.

Orono Sedge

- State Rank: S3
- Global Rank: G3
- State Status: Threatened

Habitat: Fields, meadows and clearings. [Old field/roadside (non-forested, wetland or upland)]

Range: Endemic to Maine (occurring nowhere else), known only from the Penobscot River valley.

Aids to Identification: Members of this genus can be difficult to identify without careful examination of microscopic features and knowledge of general groups of species. *C. oronensis* is one of the section *Ovales* (within the genus), a group distinguished by its dense roundish heads of fruits and perigynia (the inflated sacs that enclose the ovary) with thin, winged margins. Orono sedge grows in loose clumps, producing sharply angled stems, 0.5-1 m tall. The leaves are much shorter than the stem, the principal leaf blades 3-5 mm wide. It is most similar to and may occur with *C. ovalis*, which also has floral scales as long as the perigynia. The two species can be distinguished by the narrower perigynia of *C. oronensis* and by minute papillage at the summit of leaf sheath (*C. ovalis* has smooth sheaths).



Ecological characteristics: *Carex oronensis* occurs with other species in the genus *Carex* at all known sites. Growth and reproduction may depend on light availability, with the largest populations growing in open sun. Plants growing in the shadiest sites tend to be few, small, and with few reproductive culms. *Carex oronensis* tends to grow in highly disturbed sites, including roadsides. The largest populations are in hayfields. The perigynium, which is shaped like a small boat, suggests that dispersal by water is possible. It has also been speculated that small teeth on the edges of the perigynium aid in dispersal by animals, and that transport of hay may have contributed to its dispersal.

Phenology: Flowers in June; fruiting July - August.

Family: Cyperaceae






Synonyms: None noted.

Known Distribution in Maine: This rare plant has been documented from a total of 40 town(s) in the following county(ies): Aroostook, Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo.

Reason(s) for rarity: Unknown. Apparently suitable habitat adjacent to known occurrences is not colonized by *C. oronensis*.

Conservation considerations: Changes in land use (e.g. conversion by development) and succession by woody species appear to be the most obvious threats to *Carex oronensis*. Because this plant typically occurs along roadsides or in hayfields, populations are vulnerable to development or road maintenance, but may be able to be worked around. The plants cannot tolerate competition from woody species, so annual mowing can help maintain

populations.

Credits	Information	Connect with Us	Support DACF Programs	Contact
 Copyright © 2013 All rights reserved.	Maine.gov Site Policies Accessibility Comments/Questions Jobs @ DACF Grants & Loans Educational Resources	 Facebook  Twitter  YouTube  Email/SMS Updates Event & Meeting Calendar See more social media...	Maine State Park Passes Volunteer Specialty License Plates Outdoor Heritage Fund Lottery Ticket Donations See more choices...	Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry 22 State House Station 18 Elkins Lane Augusta, ME 04333 More Locations Phone: (207) 287-3200 Fax: (207) 287-2400 TTY: Maine Relay 711 DACF@Maine.gov