

## CAREX BRUNNESCENS IN ILLINOIS

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### ABSTRACT

The occurrence of the sedge *Carex brunnescens* in Illinois is reported for the first time.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Carex brunnescens* (Pers.) Poir. is a circumboreal sedge that occurs in North America from Alaska to Greenland, south along the Appalachian Mountains to North Carolina, and west to Utah and Washington (MacKenzie, 1940; Fernald, 1950). This paper is the first report of this species in Illinois, where it occurs at the southern limits of its Midwestern range in Gavin Bog and Volo Bog Nature Preserves in northwestern Lake County. The Illinois material is referable to the var. *sphaerostachya* (Tuckerm.) Kukenth.

Fruiting specimens of *Carex brunnescens* were collected from Gavin Bog in July and October, 1985, and June, 1986 (Taft & Solecki 1793, 1877, 2064, 2067 ILLS; and 2066 MOR) during a floristic inventory of the preserve. This discovery post-dates two previous but unreported collections of this sedge in Illinois. *C. brunnescens* was collected twice in fruit from Volo Bog, once in 1948 (Evers 10338 & 10342 ILLS) and again in June, 1985 (Swink & Johnson 5306 MOR). Volo Bog lies 6.5 km southwest of Gavin Bog.

At Gavin Bog, this sedge is locally occasional, growing in a tall shrub and forested bog among tussocks of *Sphagnum* spp., and *Carex trisperma* Dew., and under *Ilex verticillata* (L.) Gray and the exotic shrub *Rhamnus frangula* L. Other associates include *Larix laricina* (Du Roi) K. Koch, *Vaccinium corymbosum* L., and *Trientalis borealis* Raf. Since the two known Illinois populations are within state nature preserves, it seems likely that the populations will survive as long as the bogs remain as intact, stable communities. Nevertheless, we feel that this species should

be considered for listing as state endangered since it is restricted to a rare habitat type for Illinois and is found at only two sites in the state.

Further north in the Great Lakes region, *Carex brunnescens* is not restricted to bog communities. In Michigan, this species is widespread and is found in low woods and occasionally in bogs (Voss, 1972). In northern Wisconsin, *C. brunnescens* is common in wet forests, but in southern Wisconsin it is principally confined to tamarack bogs (Fassett, 1976). This sedge occurs in at least one bog in Kenosha County, Wisconsin (Swink and Wilhelm, 1979), the county immediately north of Lake County, Illinois. *C. brunnescens* was only recently verified in Indiana (Anonymous, 1986), where it occurred in a wooded depression in the extreme northeast corner of the state (Jim Aldrich, personal communication).

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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