

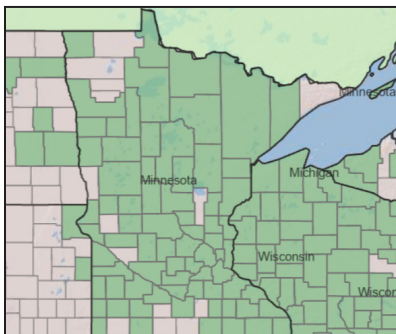
Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*)

Family: Sedge (Cyperaceae)

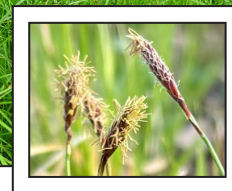
DESCRIPTION: Found throughout Minnesota, Pennsylvania sedge grows in woodlands and along savanna edges. The plant blooms from May to June, producing showy male flower spikes and cream-colored stamens. It spreads primarily by rhizomes, and tolerates disturbance well. Because of its ability to thrive in disturbed conditions, an abundance of Pennsylvania sedge may indicate low plant diversity or a degraded habitat.

USES: Pennsylvania sedge provides nesting habitat for several bird species. Ducks, cranes and grouse use it for cover. It also serves as a host plant for many butterflies and moths. Those seeking an alternative to traditional turf grass lawns often choose this species because of its soft, fine-textured appearance and tolerance for dry soils.

REFERENCES:
[Minnesota Wildflowers](#)
[U.S. Forest Service](#)
[Native Plant Trust](#)



Range Map Credit: USDA Plants Database



Planting Recommendations

A hardy plant that grows in sun or shade, and in wet or dry soils, Pennsylvania sedge prefers drier conditions. Dividing mature plants is the best establishment method. Divide clumps and transplant them in spring or fall, spacing plants 8 to 12 inches apart. Its fibrous,

rhizomatous roots allow it to spread well in yards and gardens. Starting from seed is not recommended, as the seeds are small, difficult to handle and slow to germinate. Good companion plants include native woodland species such as ferns, phlox and columbine.

Developed by Ben Dvorak, Goodhue Soil & Water Conservation District natural resource specialist

Photo Credit: University of Minnesota
Inset Photo Credit: Beau Kennedy



STATEWIDE WETLAND INDICATOR STATUS: None

ID: Leaves are basal, alternate, narrow and 1 to 2 feet long. Like all sedges, they are V-shaped in cross section. Pennsylvania sedge spikes are identifiable by their showy, cream-colored stamens, which can be up to about 1 inch long.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Ivory sedge (*Carex eburnea*) grows in similar habitats but is smaller and shorter. Long-stalked sedge (*Carex pedunculata*) is similar in size but has evergreen leaves, a red-purple base and prefers wetter areas.