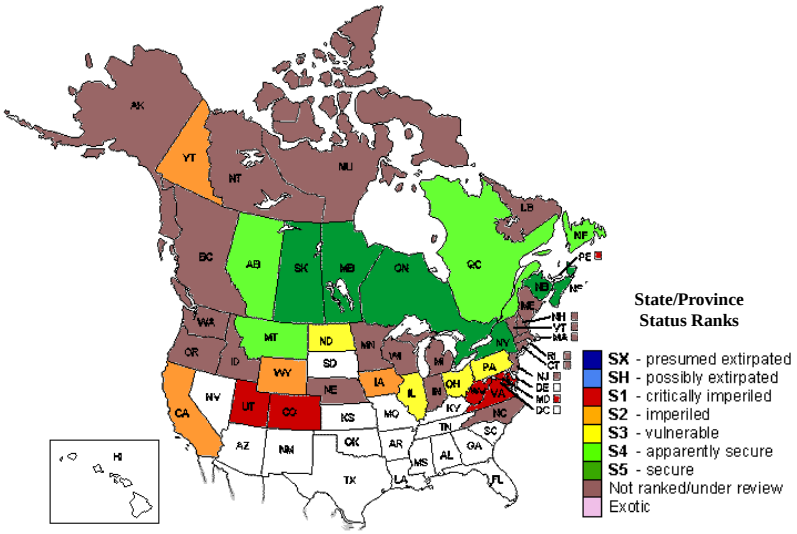
Slender Sedge
Carex lasiocarpa

Description
Slender Sedge is a grass-like plant that forms patches in boggy places due to its wide-spreading underground stems, or rhizomes. The aerial stems are triangular in cross-section and may grow to 3 feet (1 m) in height (0.6 m). The leaves have sheathing bases and very narrow (1/16 inch, or 2 mm), folded, elongated blades that taper to extremely slender tips. The flowers, appearing from May to July, are minute and are grouped in male or female clusters, with 1 or 2 stalked and slender male clusters at the top of the stem and the 1 to 3 unstalked and broader female clusters farther down the stem. The female cluster consists of individual inflated sac-like structures, or perigynia, which are about 1/8 inch (3.5 mm) in length, hairy, with 2 slender teeth at the tip, and contain the three-sided fruit. This species often does not produce many flowering and fruiting stems, yet may still be identified by its rhizomatous growth habit and very narrow vegetative leaves with their very slender tips.

Photo source: John Kunsman (PNHP)

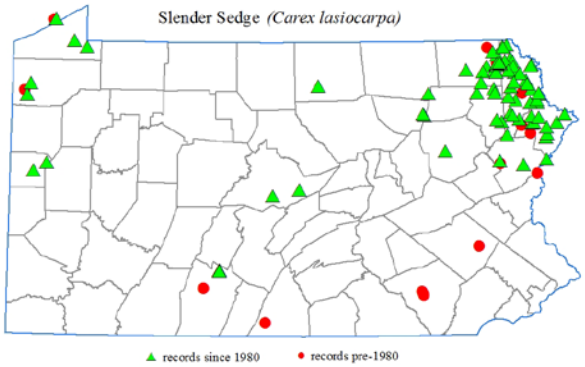
Distribution & Habitat
Slender Sedge has a transcontinental range across the cooler regions of North America. In Pennsylvania, it can be considered a northerly species and has been documented historically mostly in the northern, particularly the northeastern, counties. It grows in bogs, peaty wetlands, calcareous marshes, and shorelines.

North American State/Province Conservation Status
Map by NatureServe 2014



Current State Status
The PA Biological Survey (PABS) considers Slender Sedge to be a species of special concern, based on the moderate number of locations recently confirmed and the wetland habitat. It has a PA legal rarity status and a suggested rarity status of Rare.

Pennsylvania Distribution
Slender Sedge *(Carex lasiocarpa)*



Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program Data 3-2014

Conservation Considerations
The viability of populations of Slender Sedge and its habitat may be enhanced by creating buffers and protecting the natural hydrology around bogs and wetlands and controlling invasive species.

NatureServe conservation status ranks
G5 – Globally secure; S3 – Vulnerable in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program

References

- NatureServe. 2014. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available at http://www.natureserve.org/explorer.
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- Rhoads, A.F. and W.M. Klein, Jr. 1993. The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Rhoads, A.F. and T.A. Block. 2007. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. 2nd edition. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.