



Common Name: BALTZELL'S SEDGE

Scientific Name: *Carex baltzellii* Chapman ex Dewey

Other Commonly Used Names: none

Previously Used Scientific Names: none

Family: Cyperaceae (sedge)

Rarity Ranks: G3/S1

State Legal Status: Endangered

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: none

Description: Perennial, evergreen, grass-like **herb** forming leafy clumps. **Leaves** 8 - 30 inches (20 - 80 cm) long, less than $\frac{5}{16}$ inch (4 - 8 mm) wide, pale blue-green, roughly hairy on the upper surface, with a tapering tip. **Flowering stems** erect, about 1 foot (30 cm) tall, usually shorter than the leaves, bearing both female-flowered and male-flowered spikes. **Female-flowered spikes** $\frac{5}{8}$ - $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches (1.5 - 3.5 cm) long, held below the male-flowered spike (lower spike in photo, right) and also hidden in the tuft of leaves. **Male-flowered spikes** $\frac{3}{8}$ - $1\frac{5}{8}$ inches (1 - 4 cm) long, at the top of the flowering stem (upper spike in photo, right). Both female and male spikes are composed of tiny, overlapping, sharp-pointed, dark reddish-purple **scales** with yellow edges and midveins, each scale enclosing an inconspicuous floret. **Fruits** are less than $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3 mm) long, 3-angled, brownish-black, hairy, on a tiny stalk, and enclosed in a papery, ribbed sac (**perigynium**). Magnification of 10x or higher is needed to examine the spikes and fruits.

Similar Species: Other upland sedges in Georgia with blue-green leaves have pale green, not purple, scales (e.g. *Carex flaccospermum*) or are found only in wetlands (*C. glaucescens*, *C. verrucosa*, *C. joori*).

Related Rare Species: Nearly 40 species of *Carex* are protected or of Special Concern in Georgia. Detailed information about 7 of these *Carex* species is provided on this website: Baltzell's sedge (*C. baltzellii*), granite dome sedge (*C. biltmoreana*), velvet sedge (*C. dasycarpa*), impressed-nerve sedge (*C. impressinervia*), wretched sedge (*C. misera*), Radford's sedge (*C. radfordii*), and Roan Mountain sedge (*C. roanensis*).

Habitat: Moist, hardwood forests in ravines, usually mid-slope, under a canopy of beech, southern magnolia, and spruce pine.

Life History: Baltzell's sedge is a perennial, evergreen herb. Like most sedges, it is wind-pollinated. Nothing is known about seed dispersal or other aspects of reproduction for this species.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during fruiting (May–June) because fruits are important for identification; however, no other sedge in this upland habitat has blue-green leaves and dark reddish-purple scales on the spike. Baltzell's sedge flowers late March–early April.

Range: Coastal Plain of Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi.

Threats: Logging and clearing, invasion by exotic pest plants, and conversion of habitat to pine plantations and developments.

Georgia Conservation Status: Only one population – on private land in Early County – is known. Plants were reported from Thomas County in the 1800s.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Protect slopes and ravine forests from clearing and erosion. Eradicate exotic pest plants such as Japanese honeysuckle.

Selected References:

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Author of species account: Linda G. Chafin

Date Compiled or Updated:

L. Chafin, Oct. 2007: original account

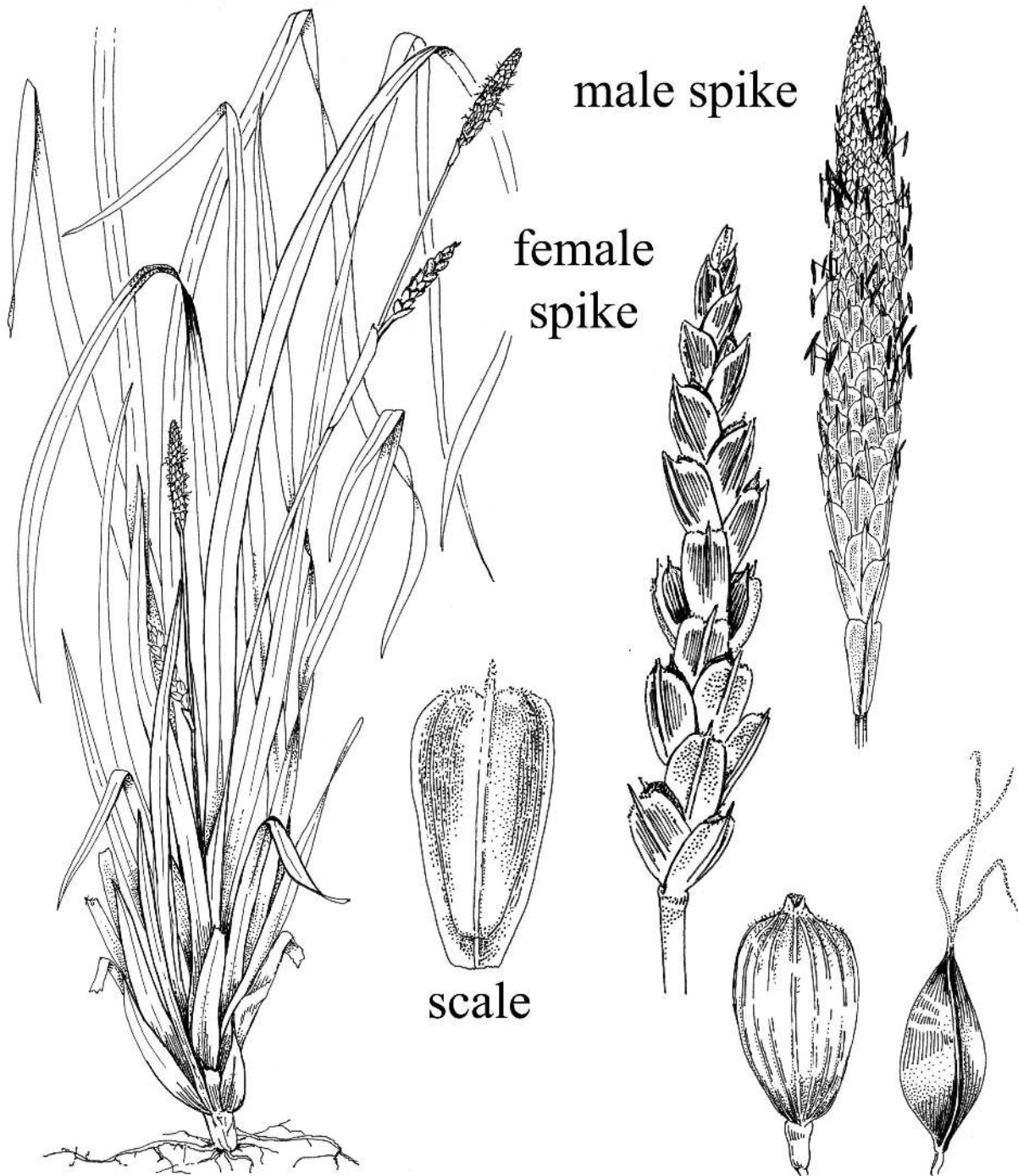
K. Owers, Jan. 2010: updated status and ranks, added pictures



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Inflorescence

BALTZELL'S SEDGE

Carex baltzellii



male spike

female
spike

scale

fruit sac fruit

J.C. Putnam det.