

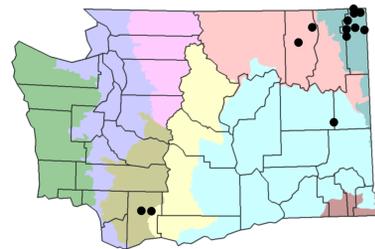
Eriophorum viridicarinatum (Engelm.) Fernald

green-keeled cotton-grass

Cyperaceae - sedge family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S2



General Description: Adapted from Flora of North America (1993+): Clustered or single-stemmed perennial; stems 2-9 dm tall. Leaf blades well developed, flat, 3-angled in cross section above, and up to 30 cm x 2-6 mm. Uppermost stem leaf with blade usually equaling or exceeding the sheath.

Floral Characteristics: Spikelets 3-30 in a terminal inflorescence, lax, 6-10 mm in flower, 15-30 mm in fruit. Blade-bearing involucral bracts 2-4, leaflike, up to 7 cm. Scales dark green to gray, pale below and darker above, ovate to lanceolate, 4-6 mm; midrib paler, prominent, enlarged above, reaching and sometimes extending beyond the tip of the scale. Perianth bristles 10 or more, white to pale brown, 15-25 mm, smooth. Anthers 0.8-2 mm long. Flowers June to July.

Fruits: Achenes 3-angled, dark brown, narrowly obovoid, 2.5-3.5 mm.

Identification Tips: *Eriophorum* spp. have perianths of many persistent, whitish bristles that elongate in fruit, resulting in a dense, cottonlike tuft at the stem tip. *E. angustifolium* ssp. *angustifolium** has scales with midribs that thin and fade toward the tip, and anthers (2) 2.5-5 mm. *E. gracile* has inflorescences with a single blade-bearing involucral bract, uppermost stem blades shorter than the sheath, and scales black or dark grey with black tips.

Range: Throughout most of Canada, AK, south to NY, MI, CO, northern ID, and WA.

Habitat/Ecology: Obligate wetland species of cold, usually calcareous swamps, bogs, fens, ponds, and wet meadows. In WA it occurs in sedge-dominated vegetation at elevations of 600 to 2000 m (2000-6440 ft). Associates include thinleaf alder (*Alnus incana* ssp. *tenuifolia*), resin birch (*Betula glandulosa*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), sedges (*Carex lasiocarpa*, *C. utriculata*, and others), purple marshlocks (*Comarum palustre*), horsetails (*Equisetum* spp.), rushes (*Juncus* spp.) and mosses (*Sphagnum* spp. and others).

Comments: Hydrologic alteration is the greatest threat to the species. Livestock grazing may have a minimal impact at a few sites. This taxon is rare in the Yukon, Prince Edward Island, AK, several western and midwestern states, and likely extirpated from IL.

References: Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 23.

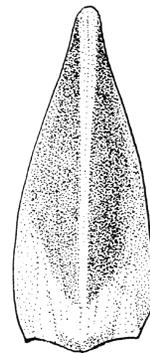


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