

## A HYBRID SEDGE NEW TO THE BRITISH ISLES

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As announced in the *Irish Naturalist* (8, p. 339: 1946), what appears to be a hybrid between *Carex hirta* L. and *C. vesicaria* L. was discovered in County Wicklow, Eire, by Mr J. P. Brunker, of Dublin, in July 1944. No hybrid between these species seems to have been recorded hitherto from the British Isles, and at the time of Kükenthal's monograph of the *Caricoideae* such a hybrid was known only from West Prussia. Descriptions show this to be very similar to the Irish plant, which does not appear to lean more to one parent than to the other, unless its shortly and subdensely hairy utricles are considered to be nearer to the longly and densely hairy ones of *C. hirta* than to the glabrous ones of *C. vesicaria*!

Kükenthal's Latin description of the hybrid found in Germany is rather short, and Fiek's two accounts are in German. Below is a full description of the Irish plants.

*Carex hirta* × *vesicaria* Fiek in *Allg. bot. Zeitschr.*, 2, 182 (excl. syn.) (1896).—×*C. Grossii* Fiek in *Aschers. et Graebn. Syn.*, 2(2). 228 (1903).—Kükenthal in *Engl. Pflanzenreich*, 4(20), 760 (1909).

*Rootstock* absent. *Stems* about 60 cm. tall, erect, triquetrous, glabrous and smooth except for the scabrid angles near the apex, rather slender, ribbed. *Leaves* absent from the base of the stem, but 4-5 present on the lower half, the lower of which are short bladed, the upper longer but falling short of the apex of the stem, about 3-3.5 mm. wide, flat or flattish, closely and rather strongly nerved, with the midrib keeled on the under-surface and canaliculate-impressed on the upper surface, glabrous except towards the base, where they are sparsely hairy, smooth below but scaberulous on the margins and midrib towards the long attenuated apices; sheaths of the lower leaves glabrous or glabrescent, stramineous to reddish, membranaceous and often splitting into herring-bone shaped fibres in front, sheaths of the upper leaves glabrous below, sparsely to densely hairy above, pale and membranaceous in front. *Spikes* 4, erect to suberect, upper 2-3 staminate, dense-flowered, slenderly cylindrical, 2.75-4 cm. long, about 1.5-3 mm. thick (when the pistillate spikes are fruiting), subapproximate, lateral ones sessile, remaining 1-2 pistillate, subdense-flowered but sometimes lax-flowered at the base, cylindrical, 3.5-5 cm. long, about 7-8 mm. thick when the utricles are fully developed, at nodes 6-8 cm. apart, sessile to very shortly peduncled. *Bracts* of the staminate spikes from subfoliaceous and about as long as the spike to reduced to large scales, not sheathing the stem, bracts of the pistillate spikes foliaceous to subfoliaceous, from about reaching to falling short of the apex of the terminal staminate

spike, glabrous, not or scarcely sheathing. *Pistillate scales* 3.5-5.75 mm. long, or about 2.75-4.75 mm. long if the rather ill-defined awn be excluded, 1.5-1.75 mm. wide, lanceolate to oblong-ovate-lanceolate or ovate-lanceolate, flattish to cymbiform, margins often involute, especially towards the apex, gradually to suddenly and obtusely narrowed above into the awn, rather thin and translucent, whitish to reddish with a broad, pale, central stripe and broadish whitish-hyaline margins, at least above, nerveless or nearly so, except for the midrib and 2 closely parallel nerves which converge upwards and coalesce to form a stouter midrib, which is excurrent in an ill-defined, minutely hispidulous-margined awn about .75-1 mm. long. *Utricles* 5-6 mm. long, 1.8-2 (2.25) mm. broad, ovoid-conical but subinflated-trigonous and somewhat shrunken, strongly pluri-nerved, evenly and subdensely covered with shortish hairs (much shorter and less dense than those of *C. hirta*), subcoriaceous, straight, obliquely spreading, shortly but stoutly stipitate at the rounded base, gradually tapering upwards and subgradually narrowing above into a compressed-cylindrical, narrowly marginate, glabrescent to sparsely hairy, sparsely hispidulous-margined, bidentate beak about 1.5 mm. long; mouth straight; teeth somewhat diverging, about .5 mm. long. *Nut* undeveloped.

*West Prussia.* On the side of a ditch between Tiegenhof and Reinland with the parents, *R. Gross*.

*Ireland.* H.20, Wicklow; coastal marsh, Magherabeg, 2nd July 1944. *J. P. Brunker*.