

Scirpus acutus

Hardstem Bulrush

Preferred Water Depth and Inundation Tolerance

Prefers saturated soils in fens and water levels to a depth of 3 feet in marsh areas. Species tolerates semi-permanently flooded conditions.

Wildlife Value

Waterfowl and shorebirds eat achenes. Muskrats and geese eat rhizomes and stems. Provides preferred nesting habitat for redhead and canvasback ducks. Also provides spawning and nursery habitat for northern pike and other fish species.

Application/Zone

Used in lower shoreline zones and in vegetated swales. Resists wave action and water level changes.

Availability, Establishment, and Maintenance

- Achenes, rootstocks, rhizomes, and transplants are available from commercial vendors.
- Achenes do not germinate readily unless they are stratified under cold, wet conditions for several months and then exposed to light and warm temperatures. Fresh collected achenes can be planted in the fall in wet mudflats after drawdown for spring germination.
- Spring planting of rootstocks and rhizomes is preferred due to greater success. Rhizomes are planted at a depth of 2-5 inches in saturated substrate and at a depth of 4-6 inches in water. Rhizomes should be placed 3 feet apart in a clustered arrangement.
- Hardstem Bulrush is a rather slow spreading plant when propagating from rhizomes. It may take up to 3 years to develop into a thick stand.

Hardstem Bulrush

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Mature Height

3.5-9.3 feet

Plant Type

Perennial emergent herb

Indicator Status

Obligate

pH

6.7-9.1

Nutrient Load Tolerance

Low to moderate

Salt Tolerance

Moderate to high

Siltation Tolerance

Low to moderate

Flowering Color and Time

Reddish brown

May to September

Light Preference

Full sun

Seeding Rate

.06 - .25 lbs/acre

