

## Northern Sedge Poor Fen

**Site Characteristics:** This fen is found in areas with  $\geq 1$  meter of peat, is primarily fed by runoff from surrounding uplands, and has low exposure to mineral-rich groundwater. This fen may occur in basins, above the level of seasonal flooding along shorelines, or in larger peatlands. Soil hydrology is saturated and the surface water is slightly acidic (pH 4.1-5.9) and nutrient-poor (calcium <13 mg/l). The microtopography of this fen consists of low to intermediate hummocks and hollows.

**Vegetation Characteristics:** The dominant graminoid is woollyfruit sedge and typical associates include cordroot sedge, muck sedge, few-fruited gray sedge, and arrow-grass. Forbs include rush aster, grass pink orchid, and swamp goldenrod. The low-shrub layer contains bog birch, pussy willow, and bog willow. The moss layer is virtually continuous, and is dominated by *Sphagnum capillifolium*, *Sphagnum fuscum*, and *Sphagnum magellanicum*. Diagnostic features include the dominance of graminoids, particularly woollyfruit sedge, an almost continuous layer of Sphagnum peat, and very few minerotrophic indicators.

**Range:**

**Conservation Status:** G3 - Vulnerable

**Management Considerations:**

### Iowa NRCS Plant Community Description

This community description is a compilation of the Community Association and its over-riding Community Alliance descriptions as provided by NatureServe ([www.natureserve.org/explorer](http://www.natureserve.org/explorer)). Where necessary, community descriptions were adapted as recommended by Iowa plant community experts.

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NORTHERN SEDGE POOR FEN						
SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STRATA	FUNCTIONAL GROUP	IA CofC	SEEDS/LB	STATE STATUS
<i>Betula pumila</i>	Swamp birch	Shrub Layer	SHRUB	9	480,000.00	T
<i>Calopogon tuberosus</i>	Grass pink orchid	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	10		SC
<i>Carex chordorrhiza</i>	Cordroot sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	10		E
<i>Carex lasiocarpa</i>	Woollyfruit Sedge	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	10	224,000.00	
<i>Carex limosa</i>	Muck sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	10		SC
<i>Carex oligocarpa</i>	Few-fruited gray sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	6		
<i>Eriophorum</i> spp.	Cottongrass	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON			
<i>Salix discolor</i>	Pussy willow	Shrub Layer	SHRUB	3	1,417,476.00	
<i>Salix pedicellaris</i>	Bog willow	Shrub Layer	SHRUB	10		T
<i>Salix</i> spp.	Willow	Shrub Layer				
<i>Scheuchzeria palustris americana</i>	Arrow-grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	10		SC
<i>Solidago uliginosa</i>	Swamp goldenrod	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	10	2,080,000.00	E
<i>Sphagnum</i> spp.	Sphagnum moss	Herbaceous Layer				
<i>Symphyotrichum boreale</i>	Rush aster	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	10		T

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