

Eleocharis tenuis



slender spikerush

Family Cyperaceae

Origin Native

WIS Code FACW CoC 3

DESCRIPTION

Clump-forming spikerush species with very slender bright green stems, four- to five-angled, erect and unbranching. Stems are rarely greater than 30 cm tall. Leaves appear absent, but actually lack blades and are reduced to brown membrane-like sheaths at the stem base.

FLOWERS AND FRUITS

May through July. Each stem bears a small, oblong spikehead (3-10 mm long) covered by many overlapping brown edged oval scales. Hidden by these scales is one tiny flower per scale. Fruits are capsules (achenes) containing a single seed and in this species they are rough, angled and with a pyramid-like appendage (tubercle) or cap at the tip of the capsule. The achene lacks the barbed bristles found in some *Eleocharis* species.

HABITAT

Depression ponds, swamps, bogs, fens, low stream banks, wet fields and pastures and low disturbed sites.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Eleocharis obtusa, blunt spikerush, is stouter with taller stems, flowers and fruits later in the growing season (July to September), has fruits with a swollen cap as wide as the fruit (not pyramid-like cap), and its fruit is surrounded by barbed bristles that are absent in *E. tenuis*. See *E. obtusa* page for more details on this species.



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Eleocharis tenuis

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Eleocharis obtusa

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