

Wool Grass: *Scirpus cyperinus*



Cultivation: The preference is full or partial sun, wet to moist conditions, and soil that is muddy, sandy, or gravelly. Shallow water is tolerated. The easiest way to start new plants is by division of the vegetative shoots of such sedges. Habitats consist of both sandy and non-sandy wetlands, including marshes, swamps, sloughs (seasonal streams), sedge meadows, gravelly seeps, and borders of ponds. This species is somewhat variable across its range. Because Wool Grass and other bulrushes often form dense colonies of plants, they provide good nesting habitat for various species of wetland birds. Muskrats eat both the foliage and rhizomes of bulrushes, while the Meadow Vole eats the seedheads.

Plant Structure: This native perennial plant consists of a clump of low vegetative shoots, from which arises one or more flowering stalks about 3-5' tall. Each blade is medium green, glabrous, and slightly indented along the middle of its length. The blooming period occurs from late summer to early fall. The florets are wind-pollinated. Each fertile floret is replaced by a tiny achene less than 1 mm. long. This achene is pale brown, 3-angled, and pointed at both ends; it is surrounded by 6 long bristles that are reddish brown, curly, and persistent. It is the exerted bristles of the many achenes in the spikelets that provide them with their woolly appearance. The root system is fibrous and short-rhizomatous. Wool Grass often forms colonies of plants.