

**Carex kobomugi**  
Japanese sedge  
Asiatic sand sedge

Compiled by Suzanne Simone, Environmental Planner for the Town of Cheshire, from resources available on the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England ([www.ipane.org](http://www.ipane.org)), USDA Plants Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>) and Georgia Court University ([http://gcuonline.georgian.edu/wootton\\_1/Carexkobomugi.htm](http://gcuonline.georgian.edu/wootton_1/Carexkobomugi.htm)) websites.

## **HISTORY**

As the common name indicates, *Carex kobomugi* was introduced to North America from its native Japan, China and Korea. The first account of introduction to the United States was recorded in 1928 at Island Beach State Park, New Jersey. It is believed that the initial introduction was from plants used as packing material in cargo shipments from Asia. In the 1960s and 1970s this species was initially propagated and deliberately planted as a dune stabilizer. In the 1990s this plant was recognized as a non-native invasive, by which time populations of this species were recorded in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina and Oregon.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

*Carex kobomugi* is adapted to the high concentration of salt and wind along the coast and sand dunes, and therefore thrives in the shoreline environment. This perennial sedge grows to a height of 4"-12" in densely packed communities. The slightly arching leaves are very stiff and measure 3-6 mm (0.1-0.25 in.) in width. Feeling the small ridge like serrations along the outer edges of the leaves easily identifies *Carex kobomugi*. These ridges are visible under a 10x hand lens. The color ranges from bright green to yellowish green, with yellow and brown leaves being more common in the spring and fall.



<http://www.lib.uconn.edu/webapps/ipane/browsing.cfm?descriptionid=121>



[http://gcuonline.georgian.edu/wootton\\_1/carexcharacteristics.htm](http://gcuonline.georgian.edu/wootton_1/carexcharacteristics.htm)

## **REPRODUCTION**

Although this species is dioecious and produces separate male and female flowers in May and June, reproduction is conducted primarily through spear-shaped rhizomes. *Carex kobomugi* has the ability to form dense stands on coastal dunes and has been found in densities of up to 200 plants per square meter.

## **INVASIVE STATUS**

According to the USDA PLANTS database, only two states, Connecticut and Massachusetts have passed legislation limiting the commercial availability of this

species. The April 20, 2005 Connecticut Invasive Plants Council's invasive plant list identifies *Carex kobomugi* as potentially invasive and banned from sale in Connecticut.

### **HABITATS IN NEW ENGLAND**

Coastal beach or dune.

*Carex kobomugi* is found on the upper dunes of sandy beaches, and in sand pits near the coast.

### **NATIVE SPECIES**

The following native plants can be successfully used for sand dune stabilization without the negative impacts associated with the monoculture of *Carex kobomugi*.

*Ammophila breviligulata* Fern. (American beachgrass). *Ammophila breviligulata* has dense inflorescences that measure 10-40 cm (4-15 in.) long and 1-2.5 cm (0.4-1 in.) wide, and its leaves are 2-ranked.

*Panicum amarum* Elliott (bitter panicum). *Panicum amarum* is glaucous and also has 2-ranked leaves.

### **SOURCES**

<http://www.lib.uconn.edu>

[http://gcuonline.georgian.edu/wootton\\_1/Carexkobomugi.htm](http://gcuonline.georgian.edu/wootton_1/Carexkobomugi.htm)

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/nameSearch?keywordquery=carex+kobomugi&mode=sciname&submit.x=20&submit.y=9>