

## COMPOSITION OF THE GENUS CAREX IN ILLINOIS

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By specimens deposited in permanent herbaria and by reports in botanical literature, no fewer than 162 species of *Carex* have been credited to Illinois. A portion of these species, as is to be expected, have been erroneously recorded for the state, partly because of wrong determinations in a notoriously difficult genus and partly because, earlier, the species conceptions within the genus were highly imperfect. Nevertheless, there still are recorded for Illinois, quite reliably, a total of 130 species. This number is approximately 24.4 per cent of all species recognized by Mackenzie<sup>1</sup> for the entire North American Continent and exceeds by 23 species the number attributed by Deam<sup>2</sup> to the neighboring state of Indiana.

With its more than 2000 species the world over, *Carex* has been divided into a large number of subgenera. On the North American Continent 71 of its subgenera are represented, and in Illinois 40 are represented. In Illinois no single subgenus predominates: the best represented subgenus is the *Ovales*, with 14 species; next is the *Bracteosae*, with 13 species; and third is the *Laxiflorae*, with 10 species. There are 4 subgenera repre-

sented by 6 species each, 2 by 5 species each, 3 by 4 species each, 6 by 3 species each, 7 by 2 species each, and 15 by 1 species each.

Of species and varieties at present recognized as valid, *Carex gravida* Bailey, *C. Bebbii* Olney, *C. tribuloides* var. *sangamonensis* Clokey, *C. Meadii* Dewey, *C. rector* Mack., and *C. subimpressa* Clokey were originally named and described from specimens collected in Illinois. *C. Typhina* Michx., the name and description of which dates back to 1803, is recorded as having been found "in regione Illinoisensi."

No single species of *Carex* is confined in range to the state of Illinois. However, one species, *C. subimpressa* Clokey, is at present known only from Illinois and Indiana.

The majority of species are of wide range and reach into or pass through Illinois from other regions which can be deemed their principal ranges. Of 109 such species, Fig. 1, 35 extend into or through Illinois from the north, 25 from the northeast, 24 from the east, 5 from the southeast, 9 from the south, 2 from the southwest, 6 from the west, and 3

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, Kenneth Kent. *Cyperaceae*. In *North American Flora*, vol. 18, parts 1-7, pp. 1-478. 1931 and 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Deam, Charles C. *Flora of Indiana*. Indiana State Department of Conservation, Indianapolis. 1940.

from the northwest. The obvious preponderance of northern, northeastern and eastern species in Illinois could be explained as being due to the situation of the state near the western edge of the deciduous forest formation.

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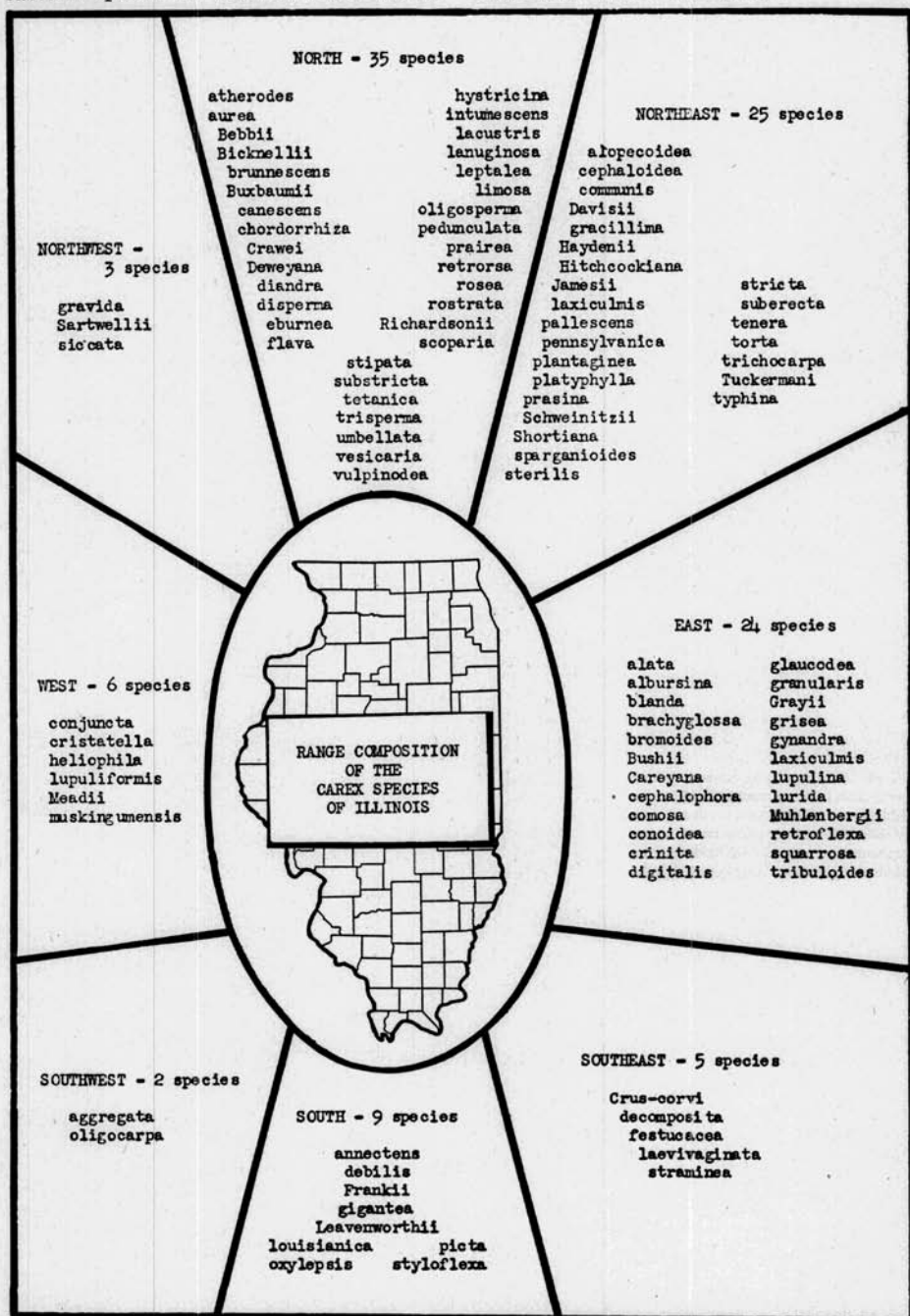


Fig. 1.—General ranges of 109 of the species of *Carex* composing the genus in Illinois.