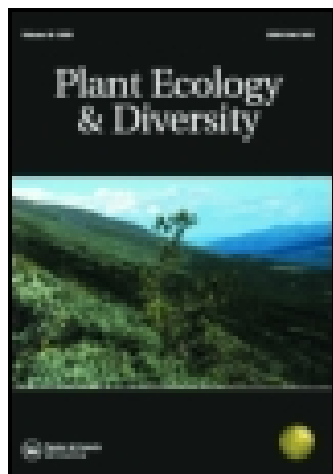


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Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/tped18>

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Published online: 01 Dec 2010.

To cite this article: Arthur Bennett F.L.S. (1886) *Carex helvola*, Blytt, in Scotland, Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh, 16:1-4, 361-362, DOI: [10.1080/03746608609468292](https://doi.org/10.1080/03746608609468292)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03746608609468292>

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Carex helvola, Blytt, in Scotland. By ARTHUR
BENNETT, F.L.S.

(Read 13th May 1886.)

While examining specimens of *Carex curta* var. *alpicola*, to try and clear up the question whether we possess the true *C. vitilis*, Fries, in Britain, I was much struck with the habit of a specimen so named from Lochnagar, which was sent me some years ago by Mr F. M. Webb, who was then curator of the Edinburgh Herbarium. On dissecting this specimen, and comparing it with my continental Carices, it seemed to match the above named species of Blytt. To make sure, I split the specimen, and sent Dr A. Blytt of Christiania half the example, and his answer was very satisfactory:—"The specimen of *Carex* you sent me belongs, no doubt, to *Carex helvola*. This specimen is rather scanty, and you ought to look for better ones at the locality where it was found by Professor Balfour. *Carex helvola* is rather common in the Norwegian highlands, and ought to grow also in the Scotch, the flora of which is so very like ours. It has not been found with ripe seeds with us, and is perhaps a hybrid."

The specimen was undoubtedly scanty, but unavoidably so. The label of the specimen runs thus:—

"1433 b *Carex curta* β *alpicola*, Wahl.
 C. vitilis, Fries (Bab. Man).

Loch-na-Gar.

Coll.

11 Aug. 1846.

Prof. J. H. Balfour.

F. M. W."

Mr N. E. Brown, of the Kew Herbarium, writes me that there are two specimens from "Ben-muic-Dhui," which may be *helvola*, but he has not yet dissected them.

There is also a small specimen on a sheet of *Carex lagopina* in the Edinburgh Herbarium, gathered by Dr Boswell (Syme), which is probably *helvola*, but it is gathered without roots, and is young.

I give a few references and its principal continental

distribution. It is also given for the "Rocky Mountains" with a query, in Mr Bailey's list of North American Carices; but it is not contained in a very complete set of Canadian Carices I owe to the kindness of Professor Macoun:—

Carex helvola, Blytt, in Fries' *Nya Botaniska Notiser*, 1849, p. 58.

Andersson, *Scand. Cyperaceæ*, p. 61.

Blytt, *Norges Flora*, p. 188-9, and Supp., p. 1254.

Hartman, *Handbok i Skan Flora*, ed. 11 (1879), pp. 471-2.

Nyman, *Conspectus Floræ Europææ*, p. 778.

Flora Danica, Supp., t. xxxii.

Herb. Normale, f. xiii. n. 85.

Carex tetrastachya, Transt. ap. Saut in *Flora*, 34 (1850).

Norway. North and Middle Sweden. Finland. Silesia. Tyrol.

In habit the plant is not unlike *C. microstachya*, Ehr., connecting in some degree the aspect of *C. lagopina*, *C. alpicola*, and *C. heleonastes*.

The growth of the rhizome is very characteristic, and if gathered with good roots, that alone is a good distinguishing character.

It must be remembered that Professor Balfour gathered this three years before Blytt described the species, and that of British plants *alpicola* was the nearest in aspect.

I trust that any botanist that visits Lochnagar this coming summer will search carefully for the plant; which should be looked for about the corrie of Loch-an-ean, in the neighbourhood of which *C. lagopina* grows. I would suggest also that likely localities are Ben-muic-Dhui, Ben Avon, Braemar, Ben-a-Buid, and perhaps Cairngorm.
