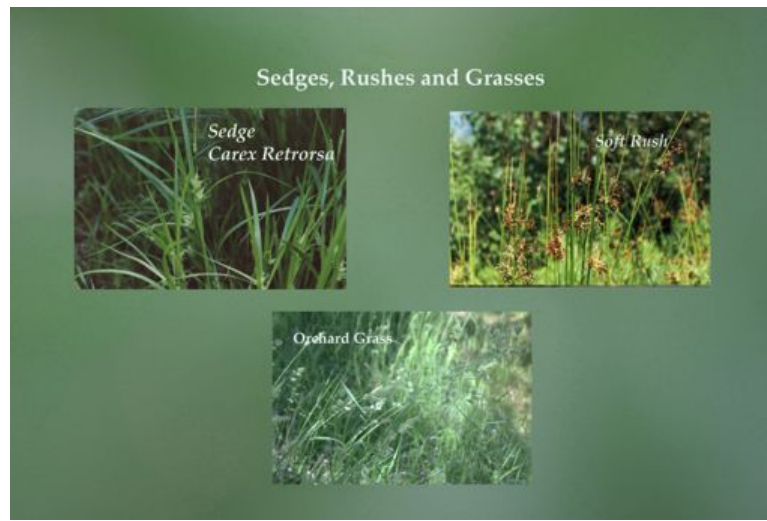


Sedges, Rushes, Grasses and Horsetails



In our fields, lawns, roadsides and wetlands, there are many green plants with somewhat inconspicuous flowers that we often call grass. They really fit into four big plant groups or families—grasses, sedges, rushes, and horsetails.

An old rhyme defines some, but not all of the differences among sedges, rushes and grasses: “Sedges have edges, and rushes are round, but grasses have nodes (joints) from their tips to the ground.” What plants in these groups could we expect to see in our neighborhood? An annotated checklist, [The Vascular Plants of Taylor County, Wisconsin](#), done by Doug Fields in 1999, can provide an idea of which plants in these families have been collected here and in adjacent northern Wisconsin counties.

The grass family (GRAMINEAE or POACEAE) had 96 species located in Taylor County and another 24 in adjacent counties. The sedge family (CYPERACEAE) had 97 species in Taylor County with another 30 in adjacent counties. The Rush family (JUNCACEAE) was a much smaller group with only 12

species in Taylor County and 3 in nearby counties and the Horsetail family (EQUISETACEAE) had 6 with one species in an adjacent county.

Books and Internet sources can be used to find drawings to help to identify the plants. Some photographed at the Kuse Nature Preserve are listed below.

Sedges	Rushes	Grasses	Horsetails
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