

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SEDGES AND GRASSES

**Sedges** (genus *Carex* part of the family *Cyperaceae*) and **Grasses** (family *Gramineae*) are very closely related and share similar characteristics such as:

1. Lacking colourful perianths (petals and sepals)
2. Having florets comprised of glumes which are scales that protect the floret within a spikelet
3. Having linear leaves
4. Both are wind pollinated
5. Unlike most flowers (dicotyledons), grasses and sedges are monocotyledons – i.e. they have one seed leaf rather than two

However, there are a number of differences in structure between sedges and grasses, some of the main ones are listed below.

**Sedges** usually have:

- Triangular (or at least 3 point symmetry) and solid stems
- Leaf sheaths that are never split
- Flowers that are spirally arranged and appearing in 4 or 5 rows
- Flowers that are often unisexual, the plant bearing separate male and female inflorescence
- Flower spikelets with only one glume

**Grasses** usually have:

- Cylindrical or flattened, and hollow stems
- Leaf sheaths that are split
- Flowers and spikelets that are arranged in two diametrically opposite rows (distichously arranged)
- Flowers that are bisexual
- Flower spikelets with two glumes