

POACEAE [GRAMINEAE] – GRASS FAMILY

Plant: annuals or perennials

Stem: jointed stem is termed a culm – internodial stem most often hollow but always solid at node, mostly round, some with stolons (creeping stem) or rhizomes (underground stem)

Root: usually fibrous, often very abundant and dense

Leaves: mostly linear, sessile, parallel veins, in 2 ranks (vertical rows), leaf sheath usually open or split and often overlapping

Flowers: small in 2 rows forming a spikelet (1 to several flowers), may be 1 to many spikelets with pedicels or sessile to stem; each flower within a spikelet is between an outer lemma (bract, with a midrib) and an inner palea (bract, 2-nerved or keeled usually) – these 3 parts together make the floret – the 2 bottom bracts of the spikelet do not have flowers and are termed glumes (may be reduced or absent), the rachilla is the axis that hold the florets; sepals and petals absent; 1-6 but often 3 stamens; 1 pistil, 1-3 but usually 2 styles, ovary superior, 1 ovule

Fruit: seed-like grain (seed usually fused to the pericarp (ovary wall) or not)

Other: very large and important family; Monocotyledons Group

Genera: 600+ genera; locally many genera

POACEAE [GRAMINEAE] – GRASS FAMILY

Big Bluestem [Turkey-Foot]; *Andropogon gerardii* Vitman
Cane [Large Cane]; *Arundinaria gigantea* (Walt.) Chapm.
Field [Mat] Sandbur; *Cenchrus longispinus* (Hack.) Fernald
Dune Sandbur; *Cenchrus tribuloides* L.
Purple Love Grass; *Eragrostis spectabilis* (Pursh) Steud.
Common [Plume] Reed; *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud.
Indian Grass; *Sorghastrum nutans* (L.) Nash
Sea-Oats; *Uniola paniculata* L.

Big Bluestem [Turkey-Foot]

Andropogon gerardii Vitman

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Kitty Todd Nature Preserve, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: culm very tall (1-4 m), 2-6 racemes on peduncle; dominant grass of the old tall-grass prairies

[V Max Brown, 2006]



Cane [Large Cane]

Arundinaria gigantea
(Walt.) Muhl.

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Sam A. Baker State Park, Wayne County, Missouri

Notes: only woody member of the Grass family,
flowers infrequently, tall plant (up to 3+ m); culms
hollow and woody; often forms "canebrakes";
summer

[V Max Brown, 2006]



Field [Mat] Sandbur

Cenchrus longispinus (Hack.) Fernald

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: finely pubescent globose bur, less than 1.0 cm, with numerous minutely barbed spines, on a zigzag spike; leaves flat; plant a painful nuisance, usually found in sandy areas often forming mats;

late spring to summer

[V Max Brown, 2008]



Dune Sandbur

Cenchrus tribuloides L.

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Tybee Island, Georgia

Notes: densely pubescent globose bur, up to 1.0 to 1.5 cm, with minutely barbed spines, not tapering at base; leaf sheaths inflated and overlapping; painful nuisance on Atlantic and some Gulf beaches

[V Max Brown, 2006]



Purple Love Grass

Eragrostis spectabilis (Pursh) Steud.

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas
County, Ohio

Notes: culms short to moderate and unbranched,
tufted; long panicles from tufts give a ball of red
to purple color in late summer and fall; spikelets
pink to purple; 6-12 florets or fewer

[V Max Brown, 2006]



Common [Plume] Reed Grass

Phragmites australis (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud.

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Maumee Bay State Park, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: very tall plant (up to 4+ m); flowers in panicles, purple, spikelets up to 1 cm; leaf blades up to 4 cm wide; common; summer to early fall

[V Max Brown, 2006]



Indian Grass

Sorghastrum nutans (L.)

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Kitty Todd Nature Preserve, Lucas
County, Ohio

Notes: tall grass; racemes few, panicle slender,
brown; spikelets and pedicels with long gray
hairs; long leaf blades tapering to base

[V Max Brown, 2006]



Sea-Oats

Uniola paniculata L.

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Tybee Island, Georgia

Notes: coarse grass with creeping rhizomes;
inflorescence a panicle, 8-20 spikelets, very flattened;
important plant in dune stabilization, found on south
Atlantic and Gulf coasts

[V Max Brown, 2006]

