

Many-flowered Panicgrass

Dichanthelium polyanthes

Description

Many-flowered Panicgrass is a perennial that forms tufts or clumps and may grow to 3 feet (1 m) in height. The leaves are alternately arranged, consisting of a basal sheathing portion, which envelopes the stem and is usually hairy on the edges, and a broadly lance-shaped, flattened, and untoothed blade that is 4 to 8 inches (10-20 cm) in length and about ½ to 1¼ inches (1.5-3.0 cm) in width, heart-shaped at the base, and long-pointed at the tip. The flowers, appearing first in June and July, and again later in the fall, occur in a branched inflorescence containing many individual nearly round spikelets that average about 1/16 inch (1.5 mm) in length and are minutely hairy. There are many species of Panicgrass in Pennsylvania, and they are difficult to identify. Many-flowered Panicgrass is one of the less difficult to recognize, particularly in its combination of relatively broad leaves and very small spikelets; this combination is in contrast with most other species that have relatively broad leaves, as they tend to have relatively large spikelets, which are mostly 1/8 inch (2-4 mm) in length and more elliptic-shaped.



Photo source: John Kunsman (PNHP)

Distribution & Habitat

Many-flowered Panicgrass ranges from New York to Indiana and south into Georgia and Texas. In Pennsylvania, it has been documented historically mostly in the southern counties. It grows in open woods, woods borders, clearings and openings, and utility rights-of-way.

North American State/Province Conservation Status

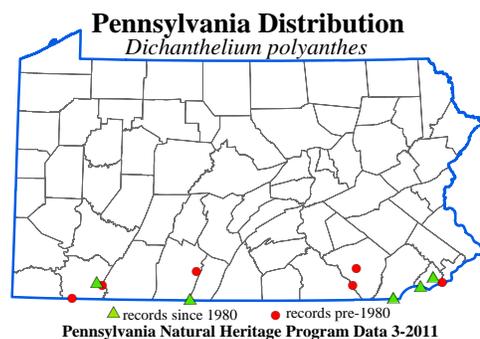
No NatureServe map available

Current State Status

The PA Biological Survey (PABS) considers Many-flowered Panicgrass to be a species of special concern, based on the relatively few locations that have been recently confirmed. It does not have a PA legal rarity status, but has been assigned a PABS status of Watch list.

Conservation Considerations

The viability of populations of Many-flowered Panicgrass may require maintaining early successional conditions and controlling invasive species. Active management, such as periodic mowing or the use of prescribed fire, may be needed to create the proper successional stage and ecological conditions for this species to thrive. Additional field surveys are needed to determine the distribution and habitat requirements of this species.



NatureServe conservation status ranks

GNR – Globally not ranked; S4 – Apparently secure in Pennsylvania

References

- NatureServe. 2011. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>.
- Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program. 2011.
- Rhoads, A.F. and W.M. Klein, Jr. 1993. The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Rhoads, A.F. and T.A. Block. 2007. The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual. 2nd edition. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.