

PANICUM VILLOSISSIMUM Nash
Villous Panic Grass

FAMILY: Gramineae (Poaceae)

SYNONYM: *Dichanthelium acuminatum* (Swartz) Gould & Clark var. *villosum* (A. Gray) Gould & Clark

HABIT: Herbaceous perennial with winter rosettes, vernal culms caespitose, erect to ascending, 2-3 dm.; flowering May-July; autumnal culms ascending to prostrate, elongating up to 6 dm., with reduced leaves on short branches; flowering June-October.

SIMILAR SPECIES: The genus *Panicum* is distinctive in Ohio. Species distinctions are based upon minute and technical characters. This is an extremely variable species in the degree of pubescence and size of spikelets. These characters sometimes overlap into those of the closely related and very similar *P. lanuginosum*, which is common throughout Ohio.

TOTAL RANGE: MA to MN, s. to FL and TX.

STATE RANGE: There is a single post-1960 record from Adams County. There are pre-1960 records from Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Jackson, Licking, and Lucas counties.

STATE STATUS: 1980-1991: Endangered, 1992-1993: Threatened, 1994-1995: Presumed Extirpated, 1996-1997: Endangered, 1998 to present: Presumed Extirpated.

HABITAT: Dry soil in a variety of habitats; open woods, openings, dunes.

HAZARDS: Unknown, but possibly grazing; also, possibly overshadowing by woody species due to succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but presumed good due to its generalized habitat.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering material with underground parts and winter rosettes is needed for identification. Note the density of basal tufts.

COMMENTS: This plant is probably more common than the records indicate, and should be sought throughout Ohio. It may easily be overlooked or misidentified.

In a major revision of this group, Gould and Clark (1978) elevate the *Panicum* subgenus *Dichanthelium* to generic level. In their treatment, *P. villosissimum* is submerged within *D. acuminatum* var. *villosum* (see Synonym). However, the taxon is here retained as *P. villosissimum* pending further clarification of this extremely complex and confusing taxonomic problem.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Gould, F.W. and C.A. Clark. 1978. *Dichanthelium* (Poaceae) in the United States and Canada. *Ann. Mo. Bot. Gard.* 65: 1088-1132.

Hitchcock, A.S. 1951. *Manual of the grasses of the United States*. Ed. 2, rev. by A. Chase, U.S. Dept. Agr. Misc. Publ. 200. 1051 p.

Hitchcock, A.S. and A. Chase. 1910. The North American species of *Panicum*. *Contr. U.S. Natl. Herb.* 15: 396 p.

Stephenson, S.N. 1984. The genus *Dichanthelium* in Michigan. *Mich. Bot.* 23: 107-119.



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