

Panicum scoparium Britt.

Velvet Panic Grass



Family: Poaceae

Synonyms: *Dichantherium scoparium* Lam. Gould

Description: A rhizomatous, perennial with culms reaching over 1 m in height. Blades lanceolate; panicle ovoid, many flowered; spikelets soft-hairy, 2-2.7 mm long.

Flowering: May to August

Fruiting: June to September

Similar Species: Superficially it can be mistaken for other panic grasses. *Panicum scoparium* has a distinctive character of a glabrous, viscid band below each node. Also, it is covered with soft, long-spreading hairs.

Total Range: USA: AL, AR, DC, DE, FL, GA, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, MO, MS, NC, NJ, NY, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV.

Ohio Range: Jackson County

Ohio Status: www.ohiodnr.com/dnap

Habitats: Seepage meadows.

Threats: Over-shading by woody vegetation and changes to the hydrology.

Conservation Potential: The only known site occurs along a highway right-of-way and the site is being managed for the species by the Ohio Department of Transportation. The species spreads by rhizomes and by seeds.



Inventory Guidelines: Collect fruiting culms;

root system not necessary for identification. This is one of the few panic grasses that can be identified from photos. Close-up photos of the leaves and the viscid band on the culm are necessary for verification.

Comments: First found in Ohio in 2001 in seepage meadow along State Route 32 in Jackson County (Gardner et al. 2004). Associates at this site include: *Agalinis purpurea*, *Asclepias hirella*, *A. incarnata*, *Carex annectens* var. *xanthocarpa*, *C. hirsutella*, *C. scoparia*, *Eleocharis tenuis* var. *verrucosa*, *Juncus biflorus*, *Rhynchospora capitellata*, *Scleria pauciflora* and *Sorghastrum nutans* (additional species see Gardner et al. 2004). *Panicum scoparium* has been recently discovered in similar habitats in Indiana (Hedge et al. 1999).

This species may be found in southern Ohio wetlands. *Panicum scoparium* is reported from a variety of wetland habitats throughout its range.

Visit the website http://www.missouriplants.com/Grasses/Panicum_scoparium_page.html for additional photos.

Selected References:

Gardner, R.L., J.S. McCormac & D. Minney. 2004. *Dichanthelium scoparium* and *Muhlenbergia glabriflorus* new to the flora of Ohio. *Sida* 21(1): 465-471.

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NatureServe. 2007. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 6.2. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>. (Accessed: December 6, 2007).

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