**Eleocharis engelmannii Steud.**
Engelmann’s Spike-rush

**Family:** Cyperaceae

**Synonyms:** *Eleocharis ovata* (Roth) Roem. & Schult. var. *engelmannii* (Steud.) Britton; *Eleocharis obtusa* (Willd.) Schult. var. *engelmannii* (Steud.) Gilly

**Description:** Annual, culms up to 40 cm long; spikelets often lanceoloid; occasionally ovoid; achenes 1 (1.5) x 0.7 to 1.1 mm; tubercles depressed; chestnut brown (Flora of North America Committee 2002).

**Flowering:** late May to September  
**Fruiting:** July to mid-October

**Similar Species:** *Eleocharis engelmannii* is easily confused with *E. obtusa*. It is separated from *E. obtusa* by depressed, triangular tubercle less than ¼ the height of achene and bristles about equaling the achene, or frequently reduced or lacking.

**Total Range:** CAN: AB, BC, MB, ON, SK. USA: AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, GA, ID, IL, IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, NC, ND, NE, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, VA, WA.

**Ohio Range:** Jackson, Lucas, Pickaway, Seneca.

**Ohio Status:** [www.ohiodnr.com/dnap](http://www.ohiodnr.com/dnap)

**Habitats:** Mudflats along margins of ponds and lakes.

**Threats:** Draining of wetlands and overshading by taller vegetation through succession.

**Conservation Potential:** *Eleocharis engelmannii* is a seed-banking species and tolerates moderate disturbances.

**Inventory Guidelines:** Collect mature fruiting specimens, cannot be positively identified from photos.
**Comments:** This species is easily confused with the very common *E. obtusa*. Intermediates between *E. engelmannii* & *E. obtusa* are occasionally found where these two species co-occur. Braun (1967) reports this species from Montgomery County based on a 1901 specimen annotated “approaching *E. engelmannii*” by Svenson in 1960.

It should be sought on open mudflats, in late summer or autumn throughout Ohio.

**Selected References:**


**Ohio Natural Heritage Program**

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