

GREEN SPRANGLETOP

Leptochloa dubia (Kunth)

Nees
Plant Symbol = LEDU

Contributed By: USDA NRCS National Plant Data Center



From Hitchcock (1950)
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Alternate Names

zacate gigante, green sprangletop.

Uses

Green sprangletop is grazed readily by all livestock, especially when green and succulent.

Status

Please consult the PLANTS Web site and your State Department of Natural Resources for this plant's current status, such as, state noxious status and wetland indicator values.

Description

Grass Family (Poaceae). Green sprangletop is a native, warm-season, short-lived, perennial bunch grass. The height ranges from 1 to 3 feet. The leaf blade is 6 to 18 inches long, usually flat, and sometimes folded. The leaf sheaths are sometimes longer than the internodes, flattened, and often purplish. The ligule is hairy. The seedhead is a spreading, open, nodding panicle 4 to 12 inches long, consisting of 5 to 20 slender, well separated branches 2 to 5 inches long. Each spikelet is 5- to 8-flowered.

Distribution: For current distribution, please consult the Plant Profile page for this species on the PLANTS Web site.

Management

During the dormant season, it furnishes good quality forage, but should be supplemented with a protein concentrate. It is used in range seeding mixtures. When this grass is a key management species, no more than 50 percent of current growth by weight should be removed at any season. Summer and fall grazing deferments of at least 90 days improve vigor, increase seed production, and provide forage for winter use. The seedhead turns pale and droops at maturity.

Establishment

Growth starts about April. If moisture is scarce, it may become semi-dormant in the summer and make new growth after the fall rains. It becomes dormant in the late fall. It may produce two seed crops, one in the spring and one in the fall. It is best adapted to deep sandy soils in Florida and to rocky hills and canyons in the rest of its range. It is seldom found on deep clay or deep sandy soils in the western part of its range.

Cultivars, Improved and Selected Materials (and area of origin)

Please contact your local NRCS Field Office.

Reference

Leithead, H.L., L.L. Yarlett, & T.N. Shiflett. 1976. 100 native forage grasses in 11 southern states. USDA SCS *Agriculture Handbook No. 389*, Washington, DC.

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For more information about this and other plants, please contact your local NRCS field office or Conservation District, and visit the PLANTS Web site <<http://plants.usda.gov>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>>

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