

CURLY-MESQUITE

Hilaria belangeri (Steud.)

Nash

Plant Symbol = HIBE

Contributed By: USDA NRCS National Plant Data Center



From Hitchcock (1950)
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Alternate Names

curlymesquite, mesquite-grass, curlymesquite grass, common curly-mesquite, curly mesquite, common curlymesquite, curlymesquite

Uses

Curly-mesquite is grazed all year by horses, cattle, sheep, goats, antelope, and deer.

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). Curly-mesquite is a native, warm-season stoloniferous perennial grass. The height range is from 4 to 10 inches. The leaf blade is flat, curly, and usually short. The leaf sheath is shorter than the internodes and mostly basal. The stem is erect and the plant is stoloniferous. The seedhead is a solitary spike usually 3/4 to 1 inches long.

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

Management

For maximum production, this grass requires proper grazing use and periodic grazing deferments of 30 to 40 days all year.

Establishment

Growth starts in late the spring and the seedheads will start emerging 30 to 40 days later. It reproduces primarily from stolons. Some stolons are aerial and produce leaves and no roots. Others creep along the ground and produce both leaves and roots at the nodes, which usually have a ring of hairs. It grows mostly in pure stands, but sometimes grows in clusters from auxiliary buds on the basal nodes. It does not tolerate shade. The plant is pale green and not a vigorous competitor. It grows on a wide variety of soils, though it grows best on loams to clay loams that have a pH of 6.8 to 7.4.

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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