

CHINO GRAMA

Bouteloua breviseta Vasey

Plant Symbol = BOBR

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From Hitchcock (1950)
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Alternate Names

Gypsum grama

Uses

Cattle, horses, sheep, and goats graze Chino grama. Sometimes limited amounts are harvested for hay. It is an important conservation grass, because it is adapted to sites on which few other species will grow.

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). Chino grama is a native, warm-season, perennial bunch grass. The height is between 8 and 12 inches. The leaf blade is usually flat, narrow, 1 to 3 inches long, and curls during prolonged dry periods and at maturity. The leaf sheath is rounded, smooth, and overlapping about two-thirds as long as the internodes. The ligule is hairy and the stem is solid. The seedhead has 2 spikes resembling a chicken's comb on top of each stalk.

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

Management

This grass dies if overgrazed. It requires a full growing season deferment every 2 to 3 years for maximum production.

Establishment

It reproduces largely from axillary buds at basal nodes. Some new plants are established from seed. When growth starts in the late spring or early summer, most of old growth greens up, because this grass stores nutrients in stems as well as in roots. It grows in nearly pure stands on gypsum sands and highly calcareous clay loam soils.

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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