

CANE BLUESTEM

Bothriochloa barbinodis (Lag.)
Herter
Plant Symbol = BOBA3

Contributed By: USDA NRCS National Plant Data Center



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Alternate Names

cane beardgrass, feather bluestem, plains beardgrass, pinhole bluestem, *Andropogon barbinodis*

Uses

Cane bluestem is a choice forage grass. Cattle search it out during early growth. Because the stems are not palatable in the fall and only the leaves are eaten, some livestock producers misjudge its forage quality. It is used in mixtures for reseeding rangelands in west Texas.

Status

Plant Materials <<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/>>

Plant Fact Sheet/Guide Coordination Page <<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/pfs.html>>

National Plant Data Center <<http://npdc.usda.gov>>

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). Cane bluestem is a native, warm-season, perennial bunch grass with height ranging from 2 to 4 feet. The leaf blade is narrow, long, and rough. The leaf sheath is sparsely hairy at the throat. The stem is round, smooth, greenish yellow, and often branching at the nodes. The node is enlarged and covered with short silvery hair. With the above characters, you can identify this grass without the seedhead. The seedhead is a raceme 3 to 5 inches long, silvery to creamy or silky white when ripe.

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

Management

Periodic grazing deferments of 90 to 100 days during the growing season are needed for maximum production, plant vigor, and maintaining the density of the stand. No more than 60 percent of the current year's growth by weight should be removed by grazing.

Establishment

Growth starts when daily temperature reaches 65 to 70 degrees F. Growing points stay close to the ground until midsummer when the seedheads appear. At that time, growing points are 2 to 4 inches above ground. The seeds ripen in the late summer and early fall. Cane bluestem is well adapted to sandy loam to loamy calcareous soils with a pH of 7.2 to 8.0, which overflow frequently. It grows on gravelly foot slopes that have a good soil-moisture relationship.

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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