



Common Name: DRUMMOND'S YELLOW-EYED GRASS

Scientific Name: *Xyris drummondii* Malme

Other Commonly Used Names: none

Previously Used Scientific Names: none

Family: Xyridaceae (yellow-eyed grass)

Rarity Ranks: G3/S1

State Legal Status: Special Concern

Federal Legal Status: none

Federal Wetland Status: OBL

Description: Perennial **herb** usually occurring in clumps; base of the plant with a shiny, reddish-brown patch, often buried in sand. **Leaves** 1¼ - 4 inches (3 - 10 cm) long, less than ¼ inch (1.5 - 5 mm) wide, flat, leaf bases overlapping and forming a fan. **Flower stalk** 1½ - 8 inches (4 - 25 cm) tall, ribbed, with a leaf-like **sheath**, as long as or slightly shorter than most of the leaves, enclosing the base of the stalk. Cone-like **flower spike** ⅛ - ⅜ inch (3 - 8 mm) long, oval, solitary at the top of the flower stalk, composed of many tan, papery, rounded, overlapping **bracts**, each bract with a small green patch; spikes usually produce only 1 flower per day. **Flower** with 3 yellow **petals**, rising from under a bract, opening in the morning and withering around noon; **sepals** are hidden under the bracts.

Similar Species: Yellow-eyed grasses are very similar; this species is distinguished by the reddish-brown patch at the base of the plant and by the sheath of the flower stalk which is about the same length as the leaves.

Related Rare Species: Harper's yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris scabrifolia*, Special Concern) has a fleshy, pink-purple base; a twisted flower stalk with a sheath shorter than the leaves; and rounded petals. Its leaves are covered with tiny bumps which give them a rough texture and a glazed look. Harper's yellow-eyed grass occurred in wet flatwoods and seepage bogs in one Piedmont and 3 Coastal Plain counties, but has not been seen in 36 years. Also see Tennessee yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris tennesseensis*) on this website.

Habitat: Open, sunny, pine-palmetto flatwoods, bogs, and hillside seeps.

Life History: Drummond's yellow-eyed grass is a perennial herb that reproduces sexually as well as vegetatively by lateral buds that develop in the axils of leaves at the base of the plant, thus forming clumps of plants. Plants produce one flower per day (rarely two) which opens in mid-morning and withers soon after noon. Flowers do not produce nectar, but attract pollen-eating insects such as bees and flies.

Survey Recommendations: Surveys are best conducted during flowering, early to mid-morning, July–September.

Range: Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

Threats: Fire suppression, ditching and draining flatwoods and seeps, clearing and logging of habitat, conversion of habitat to pine plantations or agriculture.

Georgia Conservation Status: Four populations are known, all on private lands.

Conservation and Management Recommendations: Apply prescribed fire every 2 - 3 years. Avoid mechanical disturbances to soil and ground cover. Protect bogs and seeps from conversion to pine plantations. Protect wetlands from drainage.

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