

NRCS Species for Plant Collections

Pascopyrum smithii

Scientific Name: *Pascopyrum smithii*
Common Name: Western Wheatgrass



1 Courtesy of The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, Ardmore, Oklahoma



2 Courtesy of The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, Ardmore, Oklahoma

Morphological Characteristics:

- native, densely colonizing turf grass
- cool season
- reproduction is both sexually, with seeds, and asexually, from rhizomes
- plant height 12-24 inches
- leaves have bluish-green color, 4-10 inches long, and 1/8 to 1/4 inch wide
- upper surface of leaves is rough to the touch due to the ribbed surface
- seedhead is a dense, narrow spike ranging from 2-6 inches in length
- spikelets are 3/8 to 3/4 inch long and overlap
- ligule is short, membranous, notched or minutely fringed
- found on moist to dry prairies, waste areas, ditch banks, and roadsides
- grows abundantly in areas subject to seasonal poor drainage and during years of heavy rainfall
- dormant in the summer, but plants start growth when daytime temperatures reach 53-55F

Conservation Use:

Why collect this plant? Texas Plant Materials Centers have identified this plant as having potential benefits to the following conservation practice standards: 645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management; 342 Critical Area Plantings; 562 Recreation Area Improvement; 550 Range Planting; 512 Pasture and Hay Planting. The planting of Western wheatgrass can provide excellent erosion control for highly erodible lands. It also provides food and cover benefits for

wildlife and is readily grazed by livestock. In western portion of Texas there is a need for locally adapted native (ecotypic) cool season plant materials for use in restoration projects. Your assistance in collecting this plant helps support this effort and the NRCS conservation practice standards which are employed daily to conserve the natural resources of Texas.

Centers Requesting Seed:

USDA-NRCS/James E. "Bud" Smith Plant Materials Center – Knox City, Texas

How to Collect Seed:

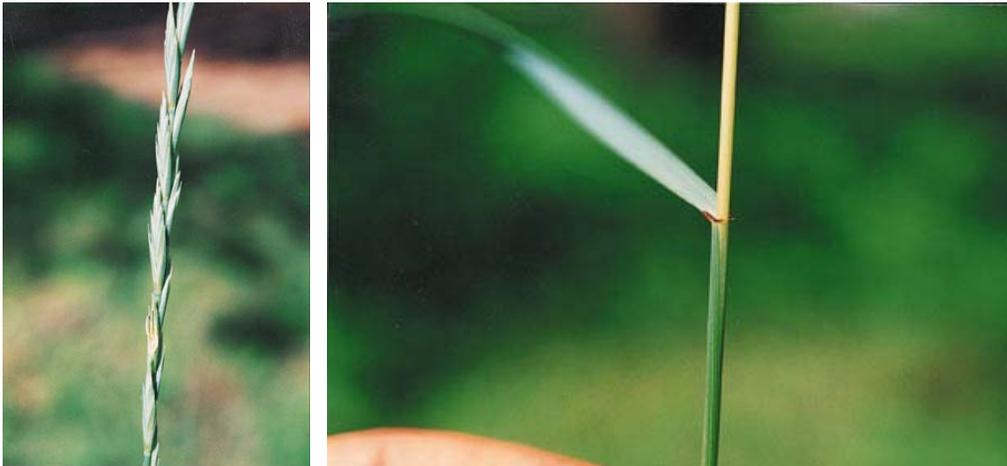
1. Identify native plant stands in your area. You can go to the following websites for helpful photos <http://plants.usda.gov> or <http://www.noble.org/imagegallery/index.html> or www.wildflower.org
2. Determine if seed is mature. Mature seed is typically dry and will easily separate from the seed head.
3. Hand strip mature seed by grasping the bottom of the seed head then gently pulling away from the base of the plant. Deposit seed in a brown paper bag and not in a plastic bag, because moisture will collect and mold seeds. Collect seed from a minimum of 30 to 50 plants.
4. Label each collection as it is made so collections do not get mixed up. Information required includes: Collector's name, number of plants collected, location (parish, city, highway, and GPS coordinates), site description (soil type, slope, and plants growing in association).
5. Complete NRCS-ECS-580; Plant Collection Information Form and mail with collected seeds to the NRCS Plant Materials Center below.

USDA-NRCS James E. "Bud" Smith Plant Materials Center
3950 FM 1292 Suite 100
Knox City, TX 79529-2514

Helpful Tips:

Look for superior plants that display differences in color, height, or forage abundance and record observations. Differences in growing site or location should be made into separate collections if they are separated by more than 1 mile between sites.

Other Photos:



3 Courtesy of The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, Ardmore, Oklahoma

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