

Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem

Schizachyrium maritimum
(Chapman) Nash



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Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem, [*Schizachyrium maritimum* (Chapman) Nash] is a selected class release from by the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in 2006.

Description

Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem is a native warm-season perennial grass that spreads by seed and short rhizomes. Plants are rhizomatous and colonial, stems usually decumbent, glaucous, reddish, and flattened at the base, terminal inflorescences with stalked spikelets.

Source

Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem was originally collected from Timbalier Island, Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana. Vegetative propagules were taken from 100 plants growing in the colony. Plant materials were propagated and increased from the original collection site by plant division and cuttings. Plant performance and adaptation plantings were established in association with bitter panicum, sea oats, and marshhay cordgrass from the Mississippi coast to plantings across the Louisiana coast and barrier islands. Though not part of an assembly, this collection has performed well and persisted in all plantings established since 1998. This species is ranked

on the Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species state heritage conservation status lists in Alabama and Louisiana as an S1 (Critically Imperiled - very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity), and a global ranking by NatureServe.org of G3 (Vulnerable - moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a restricted range). Timbalier germplasm is potentially imperiled in Louisiana because of its rarity and factors that make it especially vulnerable to extinction.

Conservation Uses

Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem is recommended for coastal beach dune enhancement and stabilization, and habitat for small mammals, shorebirds, and migratory birds.

Area of Adaptation and Use

Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem is intended for use on coastal beaches and barrier islands of the north central Gulf of Mexico basin. It performs best on the leeward side of the primary dune. Timbalier Germplasm is an excellent planting component to increase diversity and back dune stabilization when planted in association with bitter panicum, sea oats, marshhay cordgrass, and other herbaceous species. It can be successfully planted with proven persistence and performance on beaches and barrier islands of the Mississippi and Louisiana coast.

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem can be successfully established using container grown or bare root plant materials. Vegetative propagules is from plant division or lower stem nodal tissue used for nursery production. Container grown or bare root propagules should be planted on 2 to 5 foot centers on the primary dune ridge, backside, the more stable dune and swale areas behind the primary dune. Interspacing with other desirable dune species enhances habitat diversity and conservation effectiveness.

No special management strategy is needed other than restricting traffic during the first year of establishment of gulf bluestem.

Ecological Considerations

There are no known serious environmental concerns.

Seed and Plant Production

Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem is vegetatively propagated to provide the highest probability of survival and planting success. It does produce viable seed, but establishment from seed has not been evaluated.



Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem off center field planting at the Nicholls State University Farm, Thibodaux, Louisiana. Photo provided by Gary Fine, Bayouland RC&D.

Availability

For conservation use: Mature stems, rhizomes and containerized material are available through commercial wetland plant growers

For seed or plant increase: Generation 0 vegetative stock is available for commercial nursery production from the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center.

For more information, contact:

Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center

438 Airport Rd., Galliano, LA 70354

Phone: 985-475-5280

Fax: 1-844-325-6941

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/plantmaterials/pmc/southeast/lapmc/>

Citation

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For additional information about this and other plants, please contact your local USDA Service Center, NRCS field office, or Conservation District <<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>>, and visit the PLANTS Web site <<http://plants.usda.gov/>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/>>

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