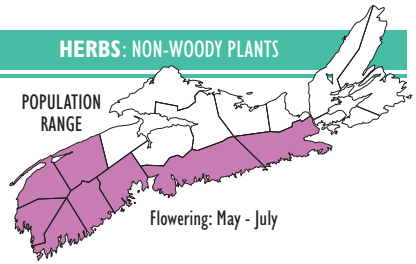


## Blue-Eyed Grasses

*Sisyrinchium* spp.

HERBS: NON-WOODY PLANTS

POPULATION RANGE



Flowering: May - July



© JEROME D'EON

**SIZE:** 10-50 cm tall.

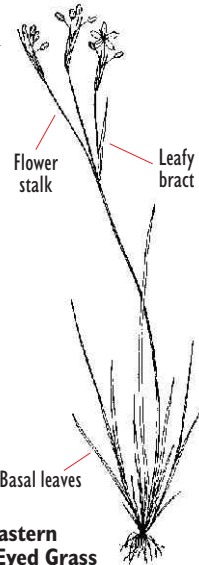
**LEAVES:** Long, narrow (linear), grass-like, 1-3 mm wide and arise from the bottom of the plant (basal). Modified leaves (bracts) are found at the top of the plant; the flower stalk arises from the base of these leaves where it joins with the stem.

**STEM:** Wiry (thin and flexible), flattened, forks at the top into 2-4 thin flowering stalks. Some stem features differ between species (below).

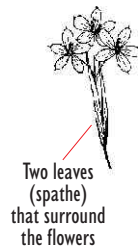
**FLOWERS:** Violet blue with yellow centers and a yellow spike in the middle. They have 6 petals with narrow points at the tips and are surrounded by two leaves (spathe).

**FRUITS:** Brown oval capsules, 4-7 mm wide, containing seeds.

**NOTES:** The 3 ACPF Blue-Eyed Grass species in NS cannot be distinguished by the appearance of the flower alone.



© USDA NRC



Two leaves (spathe) that surround the flowers

**Eastern Blue-Eyed Grass**



Fruit capsules and seeds © MEGAN CROWLEY



Coastal Plain Blue-Eyed Grass Flower © DANIELLE O'DELL, NCF

### Eastern Blue-Eyed Grass

*Sisyrinchium atlanticum*

NS General Status Rank: Secure

☞☞ Distribution: NS

Stems narrowly winged, 0.5-2 mm wide. Leaves at the base dry to a light green and are not persistent.

### Pointed Blue-Eyed Grass

*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*

NS General Status Rank: Secure

☞☞ Distribution: NS, NB, QC, ON

Stems flatter and broadly winged, 2.5-4 mm wide.

### Coastal Plain Blue-Eyed Grass

*Sisyrinchium fuscatum*

NS General Status Rank: At Risk

☞☞ Distribution: NS

Stems narrowly winged, 0.5-2 mm wide. Old leaves at the base are persistent (stay attached to the plant), fibrous, and are a brown colour when dry. Typically in drier, sandy habitats such as sand barrens.

**Habitat:**

Damp peaty, gravelly, or sandy lakeshores, wetlands (marshes), fields, and estuaries.

**Interesting point:** Despite its name, this plant is not a grass. It is a member of the Iris family and gets its name from its grass-like leaves.

**Similar species:** Common Blue-Eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium montanum*) is 10-50 cm tall with winged stems 1.5-3 mm wide. Unlike the other three species, the top of the stem is simple and not branched. Found in open areas and meadows.