

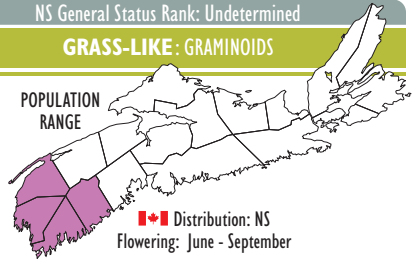


Saltmarsh Virginia Wild Rye
Elymus virginicus var. *halophilus*

NS General Status Rank: Undetermined

GRASS-LIKE : GRAMINOIDS

POPULATION
RANGE



🇨🇦 Distribution: NS
Flowering: June - September



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Leaves

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Dense spike

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SIZE: 30-80 cm tall.

LEAVES: Flat and elongated, 2-9 mm wide, smooth to slightly rough and with edges often rolled inward. They are often noticeably blue or grey-green in colour and tend to point upwards. Stems typically have 4 to 6 evenly spaced leaf blades.

STEM: Stout and erect, typically growing in dense patches (cespitose) and sometimes a blue or grey-green colour.

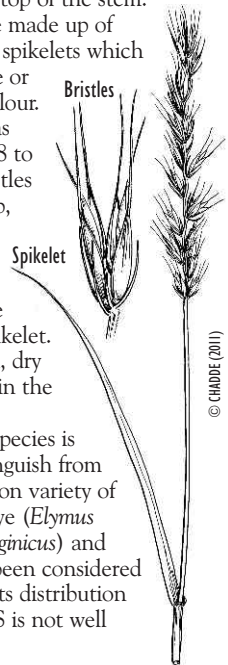
FLOWERS: Arranged in a coarse, dense and erect spike (3.5-11 cm long) at the top of the stem.

These spikes are made up of numerous small spikelets which are strongly blue or grey-green in colour. Each spikelet has several straight 8 to 20 mm long bristles (awns) at the tip, giving it a spiny appearance.

The bristles are almost twice the length of the spikelet.

FRUITS: Small, dry grains enclosed in the spikelets

NOTES: This species is difficult to distinguish from the more common variety of Virginia Wild Rye (*Elymus virginicus* var. *virginicus*) and has not always been considered a valid variety. Its distribution and status in NS is not well understood.



Habitat:

Edges of salt marshes, brackish marshes and moist to damp dune slacks.

Interesting point: Wild Rye grasses are eaten by many animals including ducks and geese, livestock, and many insects (including leaf hoppers, beetles, and stink bugs).

Similar species: The more common variety of Virginia Wild Rye (*Elymus virginicus* var. *virginicus*) is very similar. It has flowering spikes that are green and slightly wider leaves (3-15 mm) with margins that are not rolled inward.