

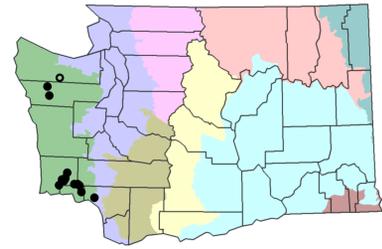
Poa laxiflora Buckley

loose-flowered bluegrass

Poaceae - grass family

status: State Sensitive, BLM strategic, USFS strategic

rank: G3G4 / S2S3



General Description: Perennial grass with creeping rhizomes, the stalks usually not clustered, erect, 9-12 dm tall; stems and sheaths rough to the touch when pulling upward. Leaf sheaths closed to about midlength; ligules 1-3 (4) mm, thinly membranous. Blades flat, lax, 10-15 cm x 3-8 mm, strongly roughened on both surfaces, the tips abruptly prowl-like.

Floral Characteristics: Panicle open, loose, (10) 12-20 (30) cm long, with branches widely spreading, the lower sometimes reflexed. Spikelets with (2) 3-4 bisexual flowers; rarely bulb-forming. Glumes keeled, 3-3.5 mm long, keels roughened. Lemmas 3.2-6 mm long, unawned, with a distinctive tuft of cobwebby hairs at the base; keel and marginal nerves covered with silky hairs, hairless elsewhere, intermediate nerves obscure. Palea nearly as long as the lemma. Anthers 0.5-1.1 mm long. Flowers late May through June.

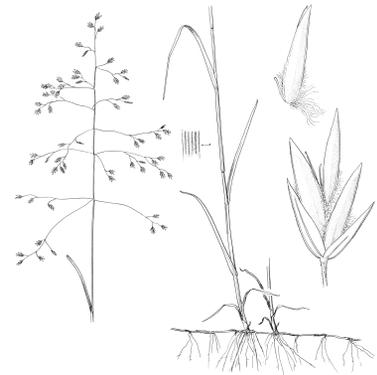


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Identification Tips: The stems of *P. laxiflora* are roughened, and the marginal nerves of the lemmas are hairy. In contrast, the stems and marginal nerves of *P. leptocoma* are smooth and hairless. Additionally, *P. leptocoma* grows in subalpine to alpine habitats and is usually considerably shorter than *P. laxiflora*.

Range: Coastal AK, B.C., western WA, and western OR.

Habitat/Ecology: On moss-covered rocks and logs, along streams and rivers, and on edges of wet meadows in moist, shady woods. Generally from near sea level to lower elevations in the mountains; elevations in WA range from 15 to 1100 m (50-3700 ft). Associated species include red alder (*Alnus rubra*), red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*), buttercup (*Ranunculus uncinatus*), sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), monkeyflower (*Mimulus dentatus*), littleleaf miner's-lettuce (*Montia parvifolia*), and grasses (*Festuca subulata*, *Glyceria grandis*, *Phalaris arundinacea*, and others).

Comments: *P. laxiflora* is rare throughout its range. Threats include timber harvest, alteration of riparian hydrology, erosion of adjacent hillsides, and bank scouring.

References: Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 24.

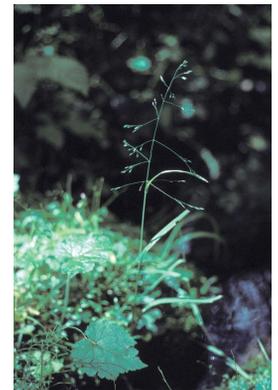


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