CUTTHROATGRASS
Coleataenia abscissa (Swallen) LeBlond
Synonyms: *Panicum abscissum* Swallen
Family: Poaceae (grass)
FNAI Ranks: G3/S3
Legal Status: US-none; FL-Endangered

Dominant herbaceous plant. Growing in mesic flatwoods at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Field Description: Glumes and **sterile lemmas** keeled along midvein; apices of fertile lemmas with a minute tuft of stiff hairs; **panicles** < 1 to > 20 cm wide, 9 - 40 cm long; **leaf blades** 8 - 50 cm long, 2 - 12 mm wide, flat (sometimes drying involute); **culms** wiry to stout; **plants** with hard crowns, cespitose, lacking rhizomes; fertile lemma 1.2 - 2.0 mm long; **sheath summit** truncate to broadly auriculate, much wider than base of blade; **ligule** membranous, to 0.3 mm long; **blades** to 2.5 mm wide.

Similar Species: The dense tufts and distinctive truncate leaf sheaths distinguish this species from other similar *Coleataenia* sp. In a well managed community, cutthroat grass will be the dominant herbaceous species.

Related Rare Species: None in FL.

cutthroatgrass ***Coleataenia abscissa***

Habitat: Wet flatwoods, prairies, and seepage areas.

Best Survey Season: Spring - Fall. Rarely flowers without growing season burn.

Range-wide Distribution: Endemic to Florida from Orange County to Hendry County, but mainly associated with the Lake Wales Ridge.

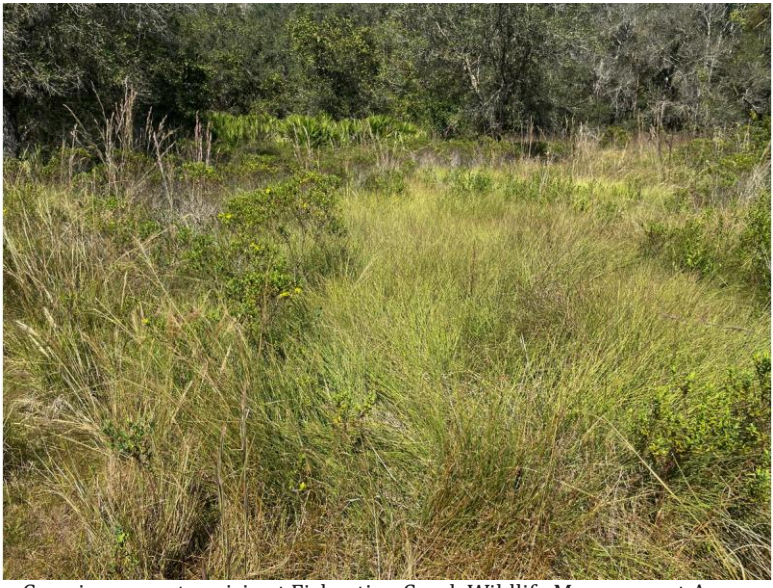
Conservation Status: Listed state-endangered and ranked as vulnerable, this species is vouchered from eight counties in central Florida.

Protection and Management: Cutthroat grass, where found, tends to grow abundantly and often forms the dominant component of the natural community. Prescribed fires, particularly growing season burns, stimulate flowering and reduces woody competition.This species frequently grows in areas of weak to strong seepage, and is thus sensitive to any upslope disturbances in hydrology.

References: Hall 2019, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.

Inflorescence a panicle. Growing on wet prairie at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.

Plants forming dense hard crowns; leaf sheath summit truncate to auriculate, much wider than base of blade. Growing on wet prairie at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.



Growing on wet prairie at Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. Photo by Kelly Anderson.