

## LAKE ELLA CRABGRASS

*Digitaria leucocoma* (Nash) Urban

**Synonyms:** *Digitaria filiformis* (L.) Koel. var. *filiformis*; *Digitaria villosa* (Walt.) Pers.

**Family:** Poaceae (grass)

**FNAI Ranks:** GNR/SH

**Legal Status:** US-none FL-none

**Wetland Status:** US-none+ FL-Not given



No Image  
Available

**Field Description:** Plants perennial; cespitose. **Culms** to 100 cm, erect, not branching at the lower nodes; nodes 1-2. **Sheaths** with appressed hairs, lower sheaths densely hairy, upper sheaths sparingly hairy near the base, otherwise glabrous; ligules 2-3 mm; blades 10-40 cm long, to 3 mm wide, usually flat, involute when dry. **Panicles** with 2-4 spikelike branches on 4-6 cm rachises; primary branches 20-25 cm long, axes triquetrous, not winged; primary branches bearing spikelets in unequally pedicellate groups of 3(-5) on the basal 1/2; secondary branches rarely present, longer pedicels often adnate to the branch axes basally. **Spikelets** 2.2-2.5 mm long, 0.8 mm wide, elliptic, acute. **Lower** glumes absent; upper glumes 3-veined, margins and intercostal regions with long, glandular-tipped hairs; lower lemmas 7-veined, margins and the region between the 2 inner marginal veins with long glandular hairs; upper lemmas light to dark brown at

maturity, striate, apiculate. **2n** = unknown. (FNA 2023).

**Similar Species:** This species split from slender crabgrass (*Digitaria filiformis* var. *filiformis*) (Weakley 2023), which has spikelets 1.3-1.9 mm long, compared to 2.2-2.5 mm long (FNA 2023).

**Related Rare Species:** There are several species in this genus occurring in Florida that are very rare, including: Caribbean crabgrass (*Digitaria dolichophylla*) and few flowered crab grass (*Digitaria pauciflora*) endemic to south Florida, Isle of Pines crabgrass (*Digitaria simpsonii*) endemic to central peninsular Florida, and Plant City crabgrass (*Digitaria subcalva*) found in St. Johns County and Highlands, Hillsborough, and Polk counties.

**Habitat:** Endemic to longleaf pine sandhills in Lake County (Weakley 2023).

**Best Survey Season:** Flowering and fruiting October through November.

**Range-wide Distribution:** Endemic to Lake County.

**Conservation Status:** There are not any known extant occurrences of this species; all 4 known occurrences are historical, all within a limited range in Lake County. Surveys are needed at historical occurrences and surrounding longleaf pine sandhills in Lake County to see whether it is still extant.

**Protection and Management:** Future potential sightings of this species should be protected from urban development.

**References:** Flora of North America (FNA) 2023, Weakley 2023, Wunderlin and Hansen (2011).