

DRUMMOND'S YELLOW-EYED GRASS

Xyris drummondii Malme

Synonyms: none

Family: Xyridaceae (yellow-eyed grass)

FNAI Ranks: G3G4/S3

Legal Status: US-none FL-none

Wetland Status: US-OBL+ FL-OBL



Brett Budach

Field Description: Low, tufted herbaceous perennial. Bases often buried in peat or sand. Leaves linear to lanceolate (3-8 cm long), with a distinct dark brown patch at the base. Flowering stem is slender (4-25 cm long). Stem sheaths are about as long as the leaves. Flowers have 3 yellow petals, opening in the morning.

Similar Species: Over 20 species of yellow-eyed grass occur in the Florida Panhandle. To the untrained eye, these plants can be difficult to distinguish. Drummond's yellow-eyed grass is most similar in appearance to *X. flabelliformis* and *X. brevifolia*, but these two species flower mostly in spring and early summer, while *X. drummondii* flowers in summer through fall. The distinct dark brown patch on the leaf base also distinguishes *X. drummondii* from the other two species.

Related Rare Species: Seven species of yellow-eyed grass are endemic or listed in Florida (*Xyris calcicola*, *X. correlliorum*, *X. isoetifolia*, *X. longisepala*, *X. louisianica*,

Drummond's yellow-eyed grass

Xyris drummondii

X. panacea, and *X. scabrifolia*).

Habitat: Seepage bogs, moist acidic sandy-peat flatwoods, and sphagnous peats of roadside ditches. Plants often found in full sun where seepage has exposed wet sand and peat.

Best Survey Season: Flowers June/July through September.

Range-wide Distribution: Coastal Plain from southeast Georgia west through the Florida Panhandle, southern Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, to eastern Texas.

Conservation Status: Drummond's yellow-eyed grass is a species of conservation concern throughout its narrow range on the Coastal Plain. Habitat is abundant, but the species is threatened by fire suppression and drainage. Severe alterations to hydrology are detrimental to this species.

Protection and Management: Apply prescribed fire to pine flatwoods and wet prairies every 2-3 years. Avoid any alteration to soil hydrology.

References: Kral 1983, Godfrey and Wooten 1979, Wunderlin and Hansen 2011.