

Rare Plants of Louisiana



Cenchrus myosuroides - big sandbur Grass Family (Poaceae)

Rarity Rank: S1/G4

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure

Range: FL, LA, SC, TX, plus Caribbean, Central America and northern South America

Recognition:

- Perennial grass with stems 0.5 to 2 m tall, stout and glaucous
- Inflorescence elongated and bristly in appearance due to “burs” containing spikelets
- Burs consisting of softer flexible spines arranged in a cup, rather than stiff interlocking spines that are characteristic of other sandbur species (and which are more painful when stepped on!)

Flowering Time: May to November

Light Requirement: Full sun

Wetland Indicator Status:

FAC – similar likelihood of occurring in both wetlands and non-wetlands

Habitat:

Shell mounds and low energy shell beaches. Records from Jefferson and Terrebonne are historical. The Jefferson record is based on a specimen collected in the 1930s from Ft. Livingston ruins (fort constructed of shell), while the Terrebonne record is a specimen collected in 1939 from “Little Temple Indian Mound” on Bayou Terrebonne.

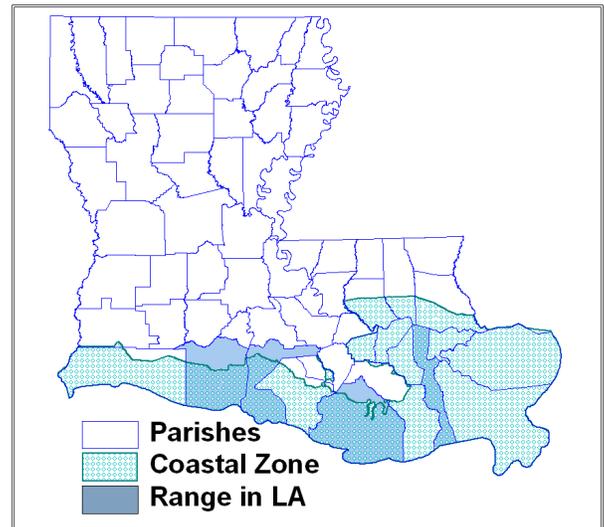
Threats:

- Mining of Native American shell mounds
- Shoreline erosion

Beneficial Management Practices:

- Survey for and protect remaining shell mounds from disturbance
- Any activities that protect beaches
- Field survey work to detect additional populations of *C. myosuroides*

LA River Basins: Barataria, Terrebonne, Vermilion-Teche, Mermentau



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Cenchrus myosuroides growing on a shell island in a lake on Marsh Island, Iberia Parish.
Photo by Richard Greig

References:

- Allen, C. M., D. A. Newman, and H. Winters. 2004. Grasses of Louisiana, 3rd ed. Allen's Native Ventures, LLC., Pitkin, LA. 374 pp.
- Diggs, G. M., B. L. Liscomb, M. D. Reed, and R. J. O'Kennon. 2006. Illustrated flora of East Texas. Vol. 1. Botanical Research Institute of Texas & Austin College. 1594 pp.
- USDA, NRCS. 2008. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA.