



Maine Department of Conservation
Natural Areas Program

Cenchrus longispinus (Hack.) Fern.

Long-spined Sandbur

Habitat: Dry sands of beaches, riverbanks, and openings. [Rocky coastal (non-forested, upland)]

Range: Maine to Florida, west to North Dakota, Oregon, California, and Texas.

Phenology: Fruits August - October.

Family: Poaceae

Aids to Identification: This burgrass is characterized by flattened stems which do not grow erect, but in a spreading fashion. The upper leafblades are 4-8 mm wide, rough above and smooth beneath. The spikelets are only 1-flowered and the mature burs, including spikes, are 1-1.5 cm thick. The illustration shows the similar species, *C. carolinianus*, which generally grows more upright and tufted.



Illustration from Britton & Brown's Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada, 2nd ed. Image shown here is *Cenchrus pauciflorus*.

Ecological characteristics: In Maine, this species grows in partial to full sun in river banks, beaches, and disturbed areas.

Synonyms: Former names include *Cenchrus carolinianus* Walt.

Rarity of *Cenchrus longispinus*

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|--------------------------|------|---|
| State Rank: | SH | Known historically from the state, not verified in the past 20 years. |
| New England Rank: | None | |
| Global Rank: | G5 | Demonstrably widespread, abundant, and secure globally. |

Status of *Cenchrus longispinus*

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|------------------------|------|-------------------------|
| Federal Status: | None | No Federal Status. |
| State Status: | PE | Potentially Extirpated. |



- ▲ Historical (before 1982)
- Recent (1982 - present)

Known Distribution in Maine:

This rare plant has been documented from a total of 1 town(s) in the following county(ies): York.

Dates of documented observations are: 1984

Reason(s) for rarity:

At northern limit of range.

Conservation considerations:

The species in general is adapted to disturbance; its conservation needs in Maine are unknown.

The information in this fact sheet was downloaded from the Natural Areas Program's Biological and Conservation Database on 11 MAY 2004. We are grateful to our Botanical Advisory Group for additional information on particular species, and in particular, to Arthur Haines for his assistance with identifying characteristics and taxonomic questions. Nomenclature follows Haines and Vining's *Flora of Maine* (V.F. Thomas Press, 1998); where older works refer to a plant by another name, it is given under "Synonyms". The Natural Areas Program, within the Department of Conservation, maintains the most comprehensive source of information on Maine's rare or endangered plants and rare or exemplary natural communities, and is a member of the Association for Biodiversity Information.

If you know of locations for this plant or would like more information on this species, please contact the Natural Areas Program
State House Station 93, Augusta, Maine 04333; telephone (207) 287-8044.

