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COMMON RANGE PLANTS....

IN NEBRASKA



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COMMON RANGE PLANTS IN NEBRASKA

By John F. Vallentine and Donald F. Burzlaff¹

This is a master list of the common range plants in Nebraska. It is divided into two sections, "Important Nebraska Range Plants" and "Common Range Plants of Secondary Importance."

The first section, "Important Nebraska Range Plants", includes those plants upon which management of Nebraska grasslands should be based. Some of these plants are palatable and productive, others are unpalatable and unproductive. However, from the presence, absence, or abundance of all plants in this group in a particular range it is possible to evaluate past use, determine range condition, and measure effectiveness of grazing and management programs.

The second section, "Common Range Plants of Secondary Importance", includes plants frequently seen

in Nebraska grasslands but which are less important indicators of management and producers of forage.

Because the practical management of a ranch requires a knowledge of only the first group of plants, educational programs in range management should emphasize recognition and evaluation of this group.

Some range plant species respond differently to grazing on different range sites or in different precipitation zones. For example, little bluestem is a decreaser in the 15 to 19-inch precipitation zone but an increaser in the 20 to 24-inch precipitation zone. Prairie sandreed increases under heavy grazing on most range sites but decreases on thin loess and shallow range sites. Western wheatgrass is an increaser except on sand and clay sites in the 15 to 19-inch precipitation zone where it is a decreaser.

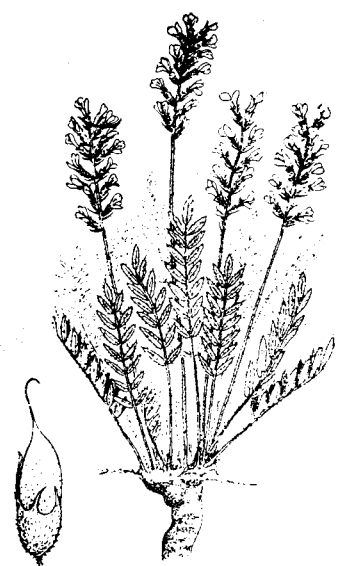
IMPORTANT NEBRASKA RANGE PLANTS



Sand dropseed

Plant Name	Life span ^a		Grazing response			Forage value ^b			Season of growth	
	Annual	Perennial	Decreaser	Increaser	Invader	Good	Fair	Poor	Cool	Warm
I. Grasses										
Alkali sacaton (<i>Sporobolus airoides</i>)		N	X			X-X				X
Annual bromes (<i>Bromus</i> spp.)	A				X			X	X	
Big bluestem (<i>Andropogon gerardi</i>)		R	X			X				X
Blowoutgrass (<i>Redfieldia flexuosa</i>)		R	X				X			X
Blue grama (<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>)		N		X		X				X
Buffalograss (<i>Buchloe dactyloides</i>)		S		X		X				X
Canada wildrye (<i>Elyr. is canadensis</i>)		N	X			X				X
Foxtail barley (<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>)		N			X			X	X	
Green needlegrass (<i>Stipa viridula</i>)		N	X			X			X	
Hairy grama (<i>Bouteloua hirsuta</i>)		N		X		X				X
Indiangrass (<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>)		R	X			X				X
Indian ricegrass (<i>Oryzopsis hymenoides</i>)		N	X-X			X-X			X	
Kentucky bluegrass (<i>Poa pratensis</i>)		R		X		X			X	
Little barley (<i>Hordeum pusillum</i>)	A				X			X	X	
Little bluestem (<i>Andropogon scoparius</i>)		N	X-X			X-X				X
Needleandthread (<i>Stipa comata</i>)		N	X-X			X			X	
Perennial threeawns (<i>Aristida</i> spp.)		N		X-X				X		X
Plains muhly (<i>Muhlenbergia cuspidata</i>)		N	X			X				X
Porcupinegrass (<i>Stipa spartea</i>)		N	X			X			X	
Prairie cordgrass (<i>Spartina pectinata</i>)		R	X			X-X				X
Prairie junegrass (<i>Koeleria cristata</i>)		N	X			X			X	
Prairie sandreed (<i>Calamovilfa longifolia</i>)		R	X-X			X-X				X
Prairie threeawn (<i>Aristida oligantha</i>)	A				X			X		X
Purple lovegrass (<i>Eragrostis spectabilis</i>)		R	X			X				X
Reedgrasses (<i>Calamagrostis</i> spp.)		R	X			X			X	
Saltgrass (<i>Distichlis stricta</i>)		R	X			X-X				X
Sand bluestem (<i>Andropogon hallii</i>)		R	X			X				X
Sandbur (<i>Cenchrus pauciflorus</i>)	A				X			X		X
Sand dropseed (<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>)		N	X			X				X
Sandhill muhly (<i>Muhlenbergia pungens</i>)		R	X					X		X
Sand lovegrass (<i>Eragrostis trichodes</i>)		N	X			X				X
Sand paspalum (<i>Paspalum stramineum</i>)		N	X			X				X
Scribner panicum (<i>Panicum scribnerianum</i>)		N	X			X			X	
Sideoats grama (<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>)		R	X			X				X
Sixweeks fescue (<i>Festuca octoflora</i>)	A				X			X	X	
Slender wheatgrass (<i>Agropyron trachycaulum</i>)		N	X			X				X

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Loco weed



Goldenrod



Verbena

Plant Name	Life span ^a		Grazing response			Forage value ^b			Season of growth	
	Annual	Perennial	Decreaser	Increaser	Invader	Good	Fair	Poor	Cool	Warm
Stinkgrass (<i>Eragrostis ciliaris</i>)	A				X			X		X
Switchgrass (<i>Panicum virgatum</i>)		R	X			X-X				X
Tall dropseed (<i>Sporobolus asper</i>)		N		X			X			X
Western wheatgrass (<i>Agropyron smithii</i>)		R	X-X			X-X			X	
Windmillgrass (<i>Chloris verticillata</i>)		S		X				X		X
Witchgrass (<i>Panicum capillare</i>)	A				X			X		X
II. Grass-like plants										
Rushes (<i>Juncus</i> spp.)		P		X			X			X
Sedges (<i>Carex</i> spp., <i>Cyperus</i> spp.)		P		X		X-X				X
Threadleaf sedge (<i>Carex filifolia</i>)		P		X		X				X
III. Forbs										
A. Legumes										
Alsike clover (<i>Trifolium hybridum</i>)		P	X			X				
American or wild licorice (<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>)		P		X				X		
Lemon scurfpea (<i>Psoralea lanceolata</i>)		P		X				X		
Loco weed or milk vetch (<i>Astragalus</i> spp., <i>Oxytropis</i> spp.)		P		X				X-X		
Purple prairieclover (<i>Petalostemum purpureum</i>)		P	X-X			X				
Red clover (<i>Trifolium pratense</i>)		P	X			X				
Silky prairieclover (<i>Petalostemum villosum</i>)		P		X			X			
Silverleaf scurfpea (<i>Psoralea argophylla</i>)		P		X		X				
Slimflower scurfpea (<i>Psoralea tenuiflora</i>)		P		X			X			
White clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>)		P		X		X				
B. Composites										
Annual sunflower (<i>Helianthus</i> spp.)		A				X		X		
Blackeyesdusan (<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>)		P				X		X		
Blacksamson (<i>Echinacea angustifolia</i>)		P	X			X				
Curlycup gumweed (<i>Grindelia squarrosa</i>)		P				X		X		
Daisy fleabane (<i>Erigeron strigosus</i>)		A				X		X		
Falseboneset (<i>Kuhnia eupatorioides</i>)		P		X				X		
Gayfeathers (<i>Liatris</i> spp.)		P	X-X			X				
Goldenrods (<i>Solidago</i> spp.)		P		X-X				X		
Gray sageworts (<i>Artemisia</i> spp.)		P		X			X			
Green sageworts (<i>Artemisia</i> spp.)		P		X-X				X		
Hairy goldaster (<i>Chrysopsis villosa</i>)		P		X				X		
Heath aster (<i>Aster ericoides</i>)		P		X				X-X		
Ironweed (<i>Vernonia</i> spp.)		P			X			X		
Prairieconeflower (<i>Ratibida columnifera</i>)		P		X				X		
Stiff sunflower (<i>Helianthus rigidus</i>)		P	X			X				
Wavyleaf thistle (<i>Cirsium undulatum</i>)		P				X		X		
Western ragweed (<i>Ambrosia psilostachya</i>)		P				X		X		
C. Other Forbs										
Annual eriogonum (<i>Eriogonum annuum</i>)		A				X		X		
Bush morningglory (<i>Ipomoea leptophylla</i>)		P	X			X	X			
Docks (<i>Rumex</i> spp.)		P				X		X		
Halfshrub sundrop (<i>Oenothera serrulata</i>)		P	X			X	X			
Milkweeds (<i>Asclepias</i> spp.)		P				X		X		
Pricklypear (<i>Opuntia</i> spp.)		P				X		X		
Pricklypoppy (<i>Argemone intermedia</i>)		A				X		X		
Rockmountain beeplant (<i>Cleome serrulata</i>)		A				X		X		
Scarlet globemallow (<i>Sphaeralcea coccinea</i>)		P		X		X				
Texas croton (<i>Croton texensis</i>)		A				X		X		
Verbenas (<i>Verbena</i> spp.)		P				X		X		
Woolly indianwheat (<i>Plantago purshii</i>)		A				X		X		
IV. Shrubs (including legumes and composites)										
Broom snakeweed (<i>Gutierrezia sarothrae</i>)		P				X		X		
Fringed sagewort (<i>Artemisia frigida</i>)		P		X			X			

^a Life span: annual (A), biennial (Bi), or perennial (P). Perennial grasses additionally classified as perennial with thizomes (R), non-rhizomatous perennials (N), or perennial with stolons (S).

^b Forage value based principally on palatability during the growing season.

Plant Name	Life span ^a		Grazing response			Forage value ^b			Season of growth	
	Annual	Perennial	Decreaser	Increaser	Invader	Good	Fair	Poor	Cool	Warm
Leadplant (<i>Amorpha canescens</i>)	P		X	X		X				
Sand cherry (<i>Prunus besseyi</i>)	P		X			X	X			
Sand sagebrush (<i>Artemisia filifolia</i>)	P		X	X				X		
Snowberry or buckbrush (<i>Symphoricarpos</i> spp.)	P		X					X		
Wild rose (<i>Rosa</i> spp.)	P		X					X		
Yucca (<i>Yucca glauca</i>)	P		X					X		

COMMON RANGE PLANTS OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE ^A

I. Grasses

Alkali cordgrass (*Spartina gracilis*) R W
 Annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*) A C
 Barnyardgrass (*Echinochloa crusgalii*) A W
 Bristlegrasses (*Setaria* spp.) A W
 Canada bluegrass (*Poa compressa*) R C
 Canby bluegrass (*Poa canbyi*) N C
 Common reed (*Phragmites communis*) R W
 Crabgrass (*Digitaria sanguinalis*) A W
 Crested wheatgrass (*Agropyron cristatum* and *desertorum*) N C
 Falsebuffalograss (*Munroa squarrosa*) A W
 Green muhly (*Muhlenbergia racemosa*) R W
 Intermediate wheatgrass (*Agropyron intermedium*) R C
 Prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) NW
 Quackgrass (*Agropyron repens*) R C
 Red lovegrass (*Eragrostis oxylepis*) N W
 Redtop (*Agrostis alba*) R C
 Reed canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) R C
 Russian wildrye (*Elymus junceus*) N C
 Sandberg bluegrass (*Poa secunda*) N C
 Smooth bromegrass (*Bromus inermis*) R C
 Sloughgrass (*Beckmania syzigachne*) A W
 Squirreltail (*Sitanion hystrix*) N C
 Tall wheatgrass (*Agropyron elongatum*) N C
 Timothy (*Phleum pratense*) N C
 Virginia wildrye (*Elymus virginicus*) N C
 Wilcox panicum (*Panicum wilcoxianum*) N C

II. Forbs

A. Legumes

Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*) P
 Black medic (*Medicago lupulina*) A
 Daleas (*Dalea* spp.) P
 Deervetch (*Lotus americanus*) A
 Illinois bundleflower (*Desmanthus illinoensis*) P
 Lupines (*Lupinus* spp.) P
 Peavines (*Lathyrus* spp.) P
 Roundhead lespedeza (*Lespedeza capitata*) P
 Sweetclover (*Melilotus* spp.) Bi
 Trailing wildbean (*Strophostyles helvola*) A
 White prairieclover (*Petalostemum candidum*) P
 Wildindigo (*Baptisia* spp.) P

B. Composites

Annual ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisifolia*) A

Asters (*Aster* spp.) P

Cocklebur (*Xanthium pennsylvanica*) A
 Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) P
 Musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*) Bi
 Pussytoes (*Antennaria* spp.) P
 Rayless greenthread (*Thelesperma gracile*) P
 Skeletonplant (*Lygodesmia juncea*) P
 Threadleaf groundsel (*Senecio riddellii*) P
 Woollywhite (*Hymenopappus tenuifolius*) Bi
 Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) P

C. Other Forbs

Annual spurges (*Euphorbia* spp.) A
 Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritima*) P
 Beebalm or horsemint (*Monarda pectinata*) A
 Buffalobur (*Solanun rostratum*) A
 Deathcamas (*Zygadenus* spp.) P
 Dogbanes (*Apocynum* spp.) P
 Evening starflower (*Mentzelia decapetala*) P
 Four-point sundrop (*Oenothera strigosa*) Bi
 Gromwells (*Lithospermum* spp.) P
 Groundcherry (*Physalis* spp.) P
 Horsetails (*Equisetum* spp.) P
 Kochia (*Kochia scoparia*) A
 Lambsquarter (*Chenopodium album*) A
 Larkspurs (*Delphinium* spp.) P
 Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia escula*) P
 Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) Bi
 Penstemons (*Penstemon* spp.) P
 Pepperweed (*Lepidium densiflorum*) P
 Pigweeds (*Amaranthus* spp.) A
 Russianthistle (*Salsola kali*) A
 Scarlet gaura (*Gaura coccinea*) P
 Shepherdspurse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*) A
 Snow-on-the-mountain (*Euphorbia marginata*) A
 Spiderworts (*Tradescantia* spp.) P
 Waterhemlock (*Cicuta maculata*) P
 Windflower (*Anemone caroliniana*) P

IV. Shrubs (woody)

Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*) P
 Eastern redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) P
 Indigobush (*Amorpha fruticosa*) P
 Skunkbush sumac (*Rhus trilobata*) P
 Smooth sumac (*Rhus glabra*) P
 Willows (*Salix* spp.) P

^a Season of growth: (for grasses only) cool season (C) or warm season (W).