

MUHLENBERGIA GLOMERATA
MARSH MUHLY
Family: Poaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.

Agency Status: USFS Region 2: Sensitive

Heritage Rank:

Global: G5 State: S2

WYNDD Plant List: Peripheral (Low
Conservation Priority)

Description: Marsh muhly is a rhizomatous perennial grass with unbranched stems 20-50 cm high. Stems are minutely pubescent below the nodes. The upper leaf blades are flat, 2-5 mm wide and have slightly keeled sheaths. Ligules are minute and membranous. The inflorescence is a greenish or purplish compressed panicle 3-7 cm long. Spikelets have one floret with long-awned glumes. The hairs at the base of the floret are half as long as the lemma (Fertig and Jones 1992; Fertig et al. 1994).

Synonyms: Included in *Muhlenbergia racemosa* by some authors.

Similar Species: *Muhlenbergia racemosa* has glabrous internodes, strongly keeled sheaths, branched stems, and grows in drier sites. *M. andina* has long hairs at the base of the floret that equal or exceed the lemma (Fertig et al. 1994). Hybrids between *M. andina* and *M. glomerata* have been reported in Montana, but have not been found in Wyoming (Pohl and Mitchell 1965).

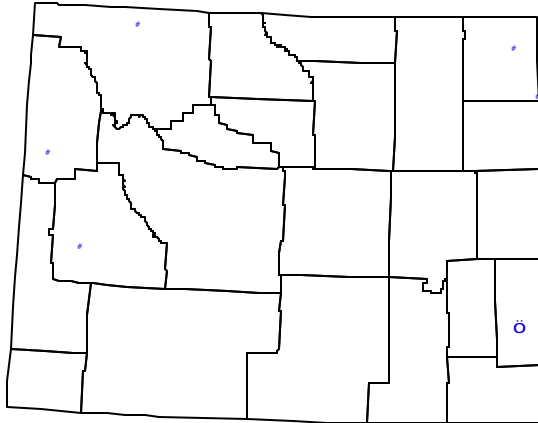
Flowering/Fruiting Period: July-September.



Above: *Muhlenbergia glomerata* by Walter Fertig.

Distribution: Newfoundland to the southern Yukon Territory and south to West Virginia, Iowa, Colorado and Nevada (Moss 1983). Sparse in Wyoming where it is known from the Black Hills, Absaroka Range, Yellowstone Plateau, upper Green River Basin, Jackson Hole, and a vague, historical record from the Eastern Plains in Crook, Goshen, Park, Sublette, and Teton counties. Previous reports from the Bighorn Range are now thought to be erroneous.

Habitat: Bogs, springs, peaty or calcareous meadows, floating mats, stream edges, and shores (Fertig et al. 1994). In Wyoming found at 4700-6600 feet.



Above: Wyoming distribution of *M. glomerata*.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from 5 extant records (most recently observed in 2000) and 2 historical reports in Wyoming.

Abundance: Census data are lacking for most sites, but populations appear to be restricted to specialized habitats. Several thousand plants were observed on the National Elk Refuge in 1997. The late summer/early fall flowering period for this plant may help explain why it is infrequently collected (Jennifer Whipple, personal communication).

Trends: Not known.

Protection status: At least 3 occurrences are protected in the Swamp Lake Special Botanical Area, National Elk Refuge, and Yellowstone National Park. This species is listed as Sensitive in USFS Region 2.

Threats: May be threatened by changes in hydrology, grazing, or exotics.

Managed Areas: Occurs on lands managed by Black Hills and Shoshone National Forests, National Elk Refuge, Yellowstone



Above: Floating mat habitat of *Muhlenbergia glomerata* at Swamp Lake, Park County, WY. Photo by Jennifer Whipple.

National Park, and possibly the BLM Pinedale Field Office.

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