

Bouteloua curtipendula

[Synonyms : *Andropogon curtipendulus*, *Aristida secunda*, *Atheropogon acuminatus*, *Atheropogon affinis*, *Atheropogon apludioides*, *Atheropogon apludoides*, *Atheropogon curtipendulus*, *Atheropogon medius*, *Atheropogon racemosus*, *Bouteloua acuminata*, *Bouteloua brasiliensis*, *Bouteloua curtipendula* var. *aristosa*, *Bouteloua curtipendula* var. *curtipendula*, *Bouteloua curtipendula* forma *vivipara*, *Bouteloua meliciformis*, *Bouteloua melicoides*, *Bouteloua pendula*, *Bouteloua racemosa*, *Bouteloua racemosa* var. *aristosa*, *Chloris curtipendula*, *Chloris secunda*, *Cynodon curtipendulus*, *Cynodon melicoides*, *Cynosurus secundus*, *Dineba curtipendula*, *Dineba melicoides*, *Dineba secunda*, *Dinebra curtipendula*, *Dinebra melicoides*, *Dinebra secunda*, *Erucaria glabra*, *Eutriana affinis*, *Eutriana curtipendula*, *Eutriana racemosa*., *Heterostega curtipendula*, *Heterostegon curtipendulus*, *Melica curtipendula*]

SIDE OATS GRAMA is a perennial grass. Native from central North America to northern South America, it has green with purple-orange flower spikelets.

It is also known as *Gammaheinä* (Finnish), Hairy muskit, Mesquite grass, Muskit grass, and Side oats grass.

Curtipendula is derived from Latin *curti-* (shortened, stunted, curtailed) and *penduli-* (hanging, pendulous) components meaning ‘short and pendulous’.

The Tewa North American Indians used grass bundles of different sizes as brooms and brushes for sweeping floors and hearths and also as hairbrushes.

For some of the Apache tribe when cooking food the grass, laid over hot stones, provided a full proof cover for containing the emanating steam.

It was side oats grama that was one of the mainstays of the many many head of nomadic bison and the American antelope-like pronghorn when they roamed unfettered over the prairies. Today the grass is still an important forage crop (also harvested for hay) not only enjoyed by livestock but also elk throughout the year and, in the Spring, antelope and other deer as well.

The grass is sometimes cultivated in sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor*) stubble so that its roots can stabilise inland sand dunes and it has also been grown on road embankments and under orchard trees.

Side oats grama has the distinction of being an emblem as it has been adopted as the State grass of Texas.