

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**Plant Abstract**

**Element Code:** PMPOA4P1L0

**Data Sensitivity:** No

**CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE**

**NAME:** *Paspalum virletii* E. Fourn.

**COMMON NAME:** Virlet Paspalum; Virlet's paspalum; Virlet's Crown Grass

**SYNONYMS:** None

**FAMILY:** Poaceae

**AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION:** Fourn., E. 1886. Mexicanas Plantas 2:12.

**TYPE LOCALITY:** Mexico: San Luis Potosi.

**TYPE SPECIMEN:** US #00140895. Virlet #1319. No date given.

**TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS:** There are approximately 300 species in the genus *Paspalum*. These are distributed worldwide in tropical and warm-temperate regions (Hickman 1993). Arizona contains 4 species of *Paspalum* (Lehr 1978).

**DESCRIPTION:** Perennial, the stems (culms) 50-100 cm tall, glabrous, from a hard, knotty, somewhat rhizomatous base. Sheaths compressed, longer or shorter than the internodes, pilose or papillose-pilose, the sheath apex usually with a tuft of long hairs. Leaf blades 6-30 cm long, 5-14 mm wide, acuminate, narrowed toward base, flat, with short, soft hairs. The inflorescence of 4-8 widely spreading spicate branches with the spikelets arranged on one side of each branch; branches 3-7 cm long, the spikelets 2 mm or slightly less long, broadly oval to oblong. First glume absent, second glume and sterile lemma glabrous, rounded at the apex; grain smooth and shiny, suborbicular, about as long as the spikelet (Gould 1951, Shreve and Wiggins 1964, Hitchcock 1971).

**AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION:** According to Kearney and Peebles (1960), the following combination of characters separate this species from other species of *Paspalum* in Arizona: unpaired racemes; terminal inflorescences; 3 or more nerved, glabrous, sterile lemma; slender culms; and 3-angled pedicels. Use of the key in Kearney and Peebles is relatively easy and highly recommended to properly identify this species.

**ILLUSTRATIONS:** Line drawing of panicle, spikelet, and floret (Hitchcock 1971).

**TOTAL RANGE:** Southeastern Arizona and Mexico (Sonora and San Luis Potosi).

**RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA:** Cochise County: Huachuca Mountains; Santa Cruz County: Pajarito Mountains, Sycamore Canyon.

### **SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS**

**PHENOLOGY:** Late August - October.

**GROWTH FORM:** Perennial graminoid.

**BIOLOGY:**

**HABITAT:** Sandy soil of canyon bottoms in semi-desert grassland communities and grassy areas within madrean evergreen woodland communities, as defined by Brown (1994).

**ELEVATION:** Two populations in Arizona are at approximately 3,500 ft.(1068 m) and 5,700 ft. (1739 m). In Sonora at elevations from 2,400 - 5,050 ft. (732-1540 m).

**EXPOSURE:** Various?

**SUBSTRATE:** Siliceous sand, acidic soils, etc.

**PLANT COMMUNITY:** This species is found in semi-desert grassland communities in Sycamore Canyon, as defined by Brown (1994). Associated species are numerous in the Sycamore Canyon population. This species is found in grassy areas within a madrean evergreen woodland community in the Huachuca Mountains, as defined by Brown (1994). Associated species in the Huachuca Mountains include *Juniperus* sp. and *Opuntia macrorhiza*. According to Martin et al. (1998), this species occurs in acidic soils of oak barrens within tropical deciduous forest communities of Sonora.

**POPULATION TRENDS:** Unknown

### **SPECIES PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION**

<b>ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS:</b>	None
<b>STATE STATUS:</b>	None
<b>OTHER STATUS:</b>	Forest Service Sensitive (USDA, FS Region 3 1999) [Forest Service Sensitive USDA, FS Region 3 1990]

**MANAGEMENT FACTORS:** This species is rare in Arizona, where it is known from only two widely separated populations.

**CONSERVATION MEASURES TAKEN:** This species has been listed “Forest Service Sensitive” since 1990.

**SUGGESTED PROJECTS:** Monitor known populations in Arizona to some extent. Search for more populations in Arizona, especially in areas adjacent to known populations.

**LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:** USFS - Coronado National Forest (Nogales and Sierra Vista ranger districts) in Arizona. Land ownership in Mexico is not known.

### **SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION**

#### **LITERATURE CITATIONS:**

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- Gould, F. W. 1951. Grasses of southwestern United States. University of Arizona Press. Tucson. p. 294-295.
- Hickman, J. C. ed. 1993. The Jepson manual, higher plants of California. University of California Press. Berkeley. p. 1280.
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- Kearney, T. H., R. H. Peebles, and collaborators. 1960. Arizona Flora. Second Edition with supplement by J. T. Howell, E. McClintock and collaborators. University of California Press. Berkeley. p. 134.
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- Shreve, F. and I. L. Wiggins. 1964. Vegetation and flora of the Sonoran Desert. p. 285
- USDA, Forest Service Region 3. 1990. Regional Forester's Sensitive Species List.
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#### **MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:**

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#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**Revised:** 1991-10-19 (ANHP)  
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