

Rhodora

JOURNAL OF

THE NEW ENGLAND BOTANICAL CLUB

Vol. 16.

May, 1914.

No. 185.

SOME GRASSES NOTEWORTHY IN MASSACHUSETTS.

EUGENE P. BICKNELL.

CORYNEPHORUS CANESCENS (L.) Beauv.

At Edgartown, Marthas Vineyard, out towards the water tower, there is a sandy sloping field, less than an acre as I recall it, a good part of which is covered by densely growing patches of this European grass. When it was first seen there, September 15, 1910, the panicles were dry and contracted, but it was easily recognizable as the same grass I had of late years collected at several places on Long Island and put aside for future study, supposing it to be some introduced species of *Aira*. Recently, at the New York Botanical Garden, specimens were shown to Mr. George V. Nash who recognized it at once as this European species, not previously reported from America, and pointed out to me the slenderly clavate awns of the flowering glumes by which it is readily distinguished from any species of *Aira*.

Since it has made itself perfectly at home at the places where it has become established, and thus promises to take its place more widely among our introduced grasses, the facts of its present status should be placed on record.

It was first met with on Long Island, June 27, 1903, growing in abundance on sandy levels along the southwestern side of the Hempstead Reservoir, and about its southern end, and was conspicuous from its densely tufted manner of growth, pale whitish green or violaceous color, and silvery panicles. On August 5, 1905, it was found, also in abundance, growing along the sandy causeway of the Ridgewood aqueduct, south of Jamaica, about seven miles to the west of the Hempstead locality. Still another station is at Cedarhurst, about five miles distant from each of the others, and nearer

the south shore of the island. Here, on June 25, 1911, it was only just in bloom, and in many of the tufts the panicles were only beginning to show. It was in full flower on Long Island, July 4, 1903, and July 11, 1911, and on Marthas Vineyard, July 7, 1913.

ELYMUS AUSTRALIS Scribn. & Ball.

On Chappaquiddick Island, Marthas Vineyard, this grass grows sparingly among low shrubbery along the top of a high bluff overlooking Katama Bay. Collected September 13, 1910, then mostly dried and brown, but still erect, the largest spikes 15 cm. long. Agrees perfectly with authentic material in Herbarium of the New York Botanical Garden. Apparently not reported hitherto from north or east of Connecticut.

PANICUM BARBIPULVINATUM Nash.

Collected on Marthas Vineyard, October 1, 1909, in a boggy spot at the north end of Sengekontacket Pond; only a few plants were found. Determined at the New York Botanical Garden by Mr. George V. Nash and Doctor P. L. Rydberg.

This *Panicum* appears not to have been recorded from east of Illinois and Wisconsin; yet it has every appearance of being indigenous on Long Island, where it grows, often in luxuriant abundance, in damp places along the shore or among the sand dunes, on the Rockaway Peninsula and at Long Beach. It comes into flower late (no panicles fully expanded September 5, 1909) and continues to bloom until killed by frost.

PANICUM SCOPARIUM Lam.

Abundant on a dry level tract near the shore south of the herring run at Great Pond, Marthas Vineyard. When first discovered there, October 6, 1909, it was mostly dried and brown, but had passed a season of vigorous growth. The following year, on September 19, much better specimens were collected bearing fresh and very numerous secondary panicles, the primary panicles having lost all their spikelets.

Has previously been reported from Massachusetts, at Cape Cod, (Hitchcock & Chase, Cont. Nat. Herb. 15: 295, 1910).

TRIDENS FLAVUS (L.) Hitch.

Abundant on a low grassy knoll flanked by trees and thickets on the west side of Sengekontacket Pond, Marthas Vineyard. In full flower, September 29, 1909.

This grass appears not to have been known from Massachusetts

previous to its discovery on Nantucket in September, 1907, where it was probably introduced (Bull. Torr. Club 35: 195, 1908). Subsequently it was reported as having been found in Southboro, in August, 1909 (Arthur J. Eames in RHODORA 12: 205, 1910).

It cannot be said positively that this grass was not adventive on Marthas Vineyard, but there was nothing in the manner of its occurrence there to suggest that it was not of the indigenous flora.

NEW YORK CITY.

OLD-TIME CONNECTICUT BOTANISTS AND THEIR HERBARIA,—I.

C. A. WEATHERBY.

JOHN PIERCE BRACE.—To claim Mr. Brace as a botanist is, perhaps, to make an unjustifiable raid on the other fields in which he was, more notably, active. Teacher, editor, author, amateur in most of the natural sciences and well-versed in "such out-of-the-way subjects of investigation" as "heraldry, astrology, the decyphering of cyphers and composing of music," his botanical interests formed but one facet, and that a small one, of a many-sided mind. Nevertheless he did publish the earliest local flora of any part of Connecticut; all his life he carefully kept an herbarium and for most of his life continued to add to it; and, according to the writer of his obituary, "...flowers were his pleasure almost in his dying moments and the last names he forgot were the botanical." In so far he must be classified as a botanist.

John Pierce Brace was born in Litchfield, Feb. 10, 1793, a descendant of Stephen Brace who settled in Hartford in 1660. His aunts, the Misses Pierce, proprietors of the Litchfield Female Academy, superintended his education and sent him to Williams College, where he graduated in 1812. Thereafter he lived for some twenty years at Litchfield, most of the time, apparently, as teacher at the Academy, a school famous in its day and one which attracted pupils from far and near, though its "plant" consisted of a single small building containing one plainly furnished class-room. In 1816, he was one of seven young men who clubbed together to purchase the memorable stove, the heat



Bicknell, Eugene P. 1914. "SOME GRASSES NOTEWORTHY IN MASSACHUSETTS." *Rhodora* 16, 81–83.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/14487>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/187708>

Holding Institution

Missouri Botanical Garden, Peter H. Raven Library

Sponsored by

Missouri Botanical Garden

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: Public domain. The BHL considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection.

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.