



Deer-tongue Grass

Dichanthelium clandestinum

(dy-kan-THEL-ee-um klan-des-TY-num)

Left: Deer-tongue Grass
Photo by and grown by John Brandauer

Description: A native grass, and food source for seed eating songbirds (at least 15 species) and turkeys. Like most grasses, it will not be browsed by deer. It is attractive, with delicate bamboo like foliage. Its tolerance for poor soil has it being used commercially to revegetate surface mine spoils. Some might view it as weed. One cultivar exists, 'Tioga'.

Other Names: Deer-tongue Panic Grass, Deertongue, Rosette grass, Deer-Tongue Witchgrass, Deertongue Dichanthelium, Panic Clandestin *Panicum clandestinum*

Type: Grass

Family: Poaceae (Grass Family)

Life Cycle: Perennial

Native Status: North America, Quebec south to Florida, and a couple states west of the Mississippi.

Light Requirements: Full sun, to light shade.

Soil Preference: Prefers moist, well-drained sandy loam, at woods edge. Moisture use is adaptable. Tolerates clay.

Care: No special care needed, very low maintenance.

Growth Rate: Slow, from seed, and slow vegetative growth, allow to self-seed for larger groups.

Foliage: Bright green in full sun, darker green with less sun.

Blooms: Miniscule, may not be visible to the naked eye. The botanical name for the genus (*Dichanthelium*) refers to the habit of twice blooming, the species name (*clandestinum*) to the concealed flowering heads.

Size: Reportedly, one to six feet tall, about a foot and a half tall for us. Could spread to three feet wide.

Wildlife Benefits: The seeds are for the birds, the foliage for caterpillars. A host for: Broad-winged Skipper, Delaware skipper, European skipper, Indian skipper, Leonard's skipper and the Northern Broken Dash. Grow this plant! An excellent weed for wildlife!

Propagation Methods: Rhizome division, clump division, or by seed.

Commercial availability: Limited availability, Toad shade Wildflower Farm, a mail order nursery in Frenchtown has it. It occurs naturally here, we divide and disperse.

Information compiled from the web, supplemented by our experiences.

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