



2020 Eagle Hill Institute
Online Natural History Seminars
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Identification of Common Grasses (Poaceae) Using Field Features

Dr. Robert Lichvar

September 21st–25th, 2020

Grasses are commonly thought of as a challenging family of plants to learn. Many taxonomy classes mention the family but spend little time introducing and learning major features needed for identification. Specimens will be shipped to students to use during live online classes and lab exercises. This online class will focus on the most common grasses, and students will be taught how to quickly identify grasses to tribes and then learn the common genera in those tribes and some of the common species within each tribe. We will identify on the order of 50 or more species of grasses using simple morphological features and a 10x hand lens. Classes will involve a series of PowerPoint slides will be used to discuss taxonomy and morphology of the grass family. Then tribe by tribe will be examined for needed features and reviewed and reviewed to build confidence. Constant class interaction and keying will occur during all the online time. Several references will be suggested to read and review for a better in-depth knowledge. But the real experience is repeating and keying tribes and genera so that a student obtains confidence in quickly placing a grass into a tribe/genus so species can be identified. The focus will be on common grasses but that survey will be useable anywhere in the US.

Dr. Robert Lichvar (rlichvar@gmail.com) has been a floristic botanist for over 35 years. He has written five floras and has done various taxonomic treatments mainly in the Brassicaceae family (mustards). His experience includes both research using morphological and molecular methods (DNA phylogenetics), and he has discovered and described six new species to science. He has worked botanically throughout the entire US including the arctic in Alaska to rain forests in Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Along with years of active research he has been teaching plant identification for 30 plus years to mainly Federal and State biologists and several universities. In doing so, he has developed simple approaches for introductory to intermediate level classes. He was formerly the Director of the National Wetland Plant List for the US Army Corps of Engineers. He's now retired back to his adopted and beloved state of Wyoming in the mountains.



Scheduling Details

September 21: 7–9 PM EST
September 22: 7–9 PM EST
September 23: 7–9 PM EST
September 24: 7–9 PM EST
September 25: 7–9 PM EST

Participants need to have a Zoom account (<https://zoom.us...> signup is free). You will receive a secure link to join the instructor before each class. Classes will be recorded so participants can review them or make up missed ones.