

IDENTIFICATION: The Tennessee Yellow-eyed Grass (*Xyris tennesseensis*) is a perennial herb and member of the family Xyridaceae. It grows up to 3.5 feet tall in association with ferns, willows, buttonbush, and bulrushes in seeps, springs and on banks of small streams. It is grass-like with 5 - 17 inch slender twisted leaves. Small pale yellow flowers appear in August and September. Habitat preferences include areas that are relatively sunny and lack an overstory of shrub or tree canopies. It does best in relatively open moist areas. This species seems to depend on disturbance and research suggests that a more hands-on management approach may be required.



Tennessee yellow-eyed grass was provided protection under the Endangered Species Act as an [endangered species on July 26, 1991](#). At the time of listing, it was found at only seven sites, one of which was in Franklin County, Alabama. This species has since been documented in Bibb, Calhoun and Shelby counties as well. This species will be considered for delisting when there are 15 protected and

managed, self-sustaining populations distributed throughout the historic range (Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee) and maintained for 10 years. In 2014, there were 23 population sites with only four being adequately protected and self-sustaining – all four are at Ft. McClellan in Calhoun County.

FORESTRY CONSIDERATIONS: It may tolerate thinnings, though site preparation, clearcutting and other forestry operations might be very damaging to this plant. Some herbicides may also adversely affect it.

DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTY: Known to occur in Bibb, Calhoun, Franklin and Shelby counties in Alabama. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service believes it may also occur in Blount, Cherokee, Chilton, Coosa, Dekalb, Etowah, Jefferson, Perry, St. Clair, Talladega and Tuscaloosa counties.

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