

## Xyridaceae

### yellow-eyed grass family

The family includes nearly 300 species in four genera. Only *Xyris* is found in Nova Scotia.

### *Xyris* L.

#### yellow-eyed-grasses

Low-growing plants with simple stems, these herbs may reach 50cm in height. The grasslike leaves are basal and erect. The single inflorescence is borne on a scape. The flowers are terminal on a scaly receptacle. Each has three petals appearing at intervals between the scales of the spike.

#### Key to species

Plants <20cm tall, leaves 1–2mm wide, 1/3 the length of the scape;  
heads 4–8mm tall.

*Xyris montana*

Plant >20cm tall; leaves to 15mm wide, ½ length of scape or more;  
heads >10mm tall.

*X. difformis*

### *Xyris difformis* Chapman

#### Bog Yellow-eyed-grass



Photo by David Mazerolle

Distinctly larger than the following species, it is taller, to 50cm and the leaves broader, to 15mm wide. The heads may be broader than tall and rounded or squared at the base. Scales are stramineous, but with greenish centres.

Flowers from July through September.

Found on sand and peat along lakeshores, barrens and often found with the next species.



*Photo by Sean Blaney*

Common in southwestern Counties, scattered east to Kings and Halifax counties.

Ranges from NS; ON, ME to MI and south along the coastal plain to TX and FL.

***Xyris montana* Ries.**

**Northern Yellow-eyed-grass; xyris des montagnes**



*Photo by Martin Thomas*

Much smaller in stature, rarely reaching 20cm in height, this species also bears much narrower leaves. The spike is ovate tapering to the base and has a few brown scales below the yellow flowers.

Flowers during July and August.

Typical species of peat on barrens, bogs and lakeshores.

Common in southwestern counties, east to Scatarie Island, Cape Breton. Scattered and less frequent inland.

Ranges from NF to ON, south to NJ and MN.



*Photo by Martin Thomas*