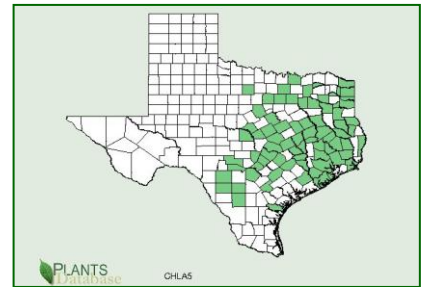


NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS

Lindheimer Chapter

PLANT OF THE MONTH SEPTEMBER, 2013

Inland Sea Oats, *Chasmanthium latifolium*



USDA Range Map: Texas

Inland Sea Oats (Broadleaf Woodoats)

Inland Sea Oats is a clump forming, warm season grass that grows 2' to 4' tall. Its most notable feature is the drooping oat-like seed heads that start out green in late spring and gradually turn light tan and then brown in mid to late summer. These are enjoyed by some small mammals and seed eating birds, and were occasionally used for food by some Native Americans.

Inland Sea Oats is one of the few native grasses that will thrive in a shady location. In fact, it will turn yellow and burn if it gets too much sun, especially if it doesn't get enough moisture. In full shade it is relatively drought tolerant. When planted in a moist location it will tend to spread aggressively from its seeds. This makes it useful for stabilizing shady stream banks. In drier locations it is more likely to stay contained. In any case, unwanted plants are easy to dig out and transplant.

The attractive seed heads make this grass a useful landscape plant, where it can be combined with other shade loving plants such as Turks Cap, Tropical Sage and Pigeon Berry. The leaves turn brown and gray in late winter so it is best to cut it back in February. New green shoots will quickly emerge for a new season of growth. Seed heads are attractive in dried floral arrangements. Deer tend to leave it alone. There have been recent attempts to rename it Broadleaf Woodoats, but it still is commonly listed by its traditional name.

Note: Inland Sea Oats is a NPSOT NICE!TM selection for Fall 2013.