

FESTUCA ROEMERI - SERICOCARPUS RIGIDUS

Roemer's fescue - white-top aster

Abbreviated Name: FERO-SERI

Synonym: *Festuca idahoensis* var. *roemeri* - *Aster curtus*

Sample size = 20 plots

DISTRIBUTION: This association represents most of what remains of native prairies in the southern Puget Sound area. Historically, there were probably other native prairie associations in this area. It is located in southwestern Pierce County, Thurston County, and the Chehalis River valley in the far eastern end of Grays Harbor County. It probably formerly also occurred in Lewis County in the vicinity of Centralia, and may have occurred on prairie soils in Mason County.

GLOBAL/STATE STATUS: G1S1. There are less than 20 remaining occurrences and they are highly threatened by invasion of non-native species, fire suppression, and development.

ID TIPS: Dominated or co-dominated by Roemer's fescue. White-top aster, houndstongue hawkweed, prairie lupine, Idaho blue-eyed grass, or sickle-keeled lupine usually present. Level or mounded topography on glacial outwash in southern Puget Sound area.

ENVIRONMENT: These sites are moderately dry and appear to be relatively nutrient-rich. Occurs on flat or mounded (Mima mounds) plains of recessional glacial outwash. Soils are deep and excessively drained, typically gravelly or extremely gravelly sandy loam in texture.

Precipitation: 38-64 inches (mean 50)

Elevation: 50-560 feet

Aspect/slope: level or mounded

Slope position: plains

Soil series: Spanaway, Spanaway-Nisqually complex

DISTURBANCE/SUCCESSION: Historically maintained as open prairie by indigenous human burning practices. In the absence of fire or other control, Douglas-fir commonly establishes and a forest eventually develops. Douglas-fir savanna or woodland can be an intermediate stage of succession.

VEGETATION: This grassland is dominated or co-dominated by the bunchgrass Roemer's fescue. The most abundant native forb

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Vegetation Composition Table (selected species):

Con = constancy, the percent of plots within which each species was found;
Cov = cover, the mean crown cover of the species in plots where it was found;
+ = trace (less than 0.5% cover).

Shrubs and Dwarf-shrubs	Kartesz 2005 Name	Con	Cov
Scot's broom	Cytisus scoparius	84	5
Graminoids			
Roemer's fescue	Festuca roemeri	100	48
long-stolon sedge	Carex inops ssp. inops	89	6
colonial bentgrass	Agrostis capillaris	79	8
wood-rush	Luzula (comosa, multiflora ssp. multiflora)	79	1
Kentucky bluegrass	Poa pratensis	68	4
California danthonia	Danthonia californica	68	2
common velvet grass	Holcus lanatus	58	1
sweet vernalgrass	Anthoxanthum odoratum	53	5
prairie junegrass	Koeleria macrantha	53	1
silver hairgrass	Aira caryophyllea	37	2
Forbs and Ferns			
hairy cat's-ear	Hypochaeris radicata	95	8
woolly sunflower	Eriophyllum lanatum var. lanatum	95	4
common camas	Camassia quamash var. azurea	89	7
white-top aster	Sericocarpus rigidus	84	3
houndstongue hawkweed	Hieracium cynoglossoides	84	2
oxeye daisy	Leucanthemum vulgare	79	4
common shepherd's-cress	Teesdalia nudicaulis	79	1
common St. John's-wort	Hypericum perforatum	79	1
yarrow	Achillea millefolium var. occidentale	79	1
sheep sorrel	Rumex acetosella	74	1
English plantain	Plantago lanceolata	68	3
western buttercup	Ranunculus occidentalis var. occidentalis	68	1
bracken fern	Pteridium aquilinum var. pubescens	63	5
common strawberry	Fragaria virginiana ssp. platypetala	63	3
graceful cinquefoil	Potentilla gracilis var. gracilis	63	2
early blue violet	Viola adunca var. adunca	53	3
self-heal	Prunella vulgaris ssp. lanceolata	53	1
spring-gold	Lomatium utriculatum	53	1
cut-leaf microseris	Microseris laciniata ssp. laciniata	53	1
meadow death camas	Zigadenus venenosus var. venenosus	53	1
prairie lupine	Lupinus lepidus	53	+
Idaho blue-eyed grass	Sisyrinchium idahoense	37	+
sickle-keeled lupine	Lupinus albicaulis var. albicaulis	32	4

