

## Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

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Maine Natural Areas Program

# *Rhynchospora macrostachya* Torr. ex Gray

## Tall Beak-rush

- [State Rank](#): S1
- [Global Rank](#): G4
- [State Status](#): Endangered

**Habitat:** Wet sand and peat. [Open wetland, not coastal nor rivershore (non-forested, wetland)]

**Range:** Florida to Texas, north to southwest Maine and west to Missouri and southeast Kansas. Not rare to the south of Maine.

**Aids to Identification:** Tall beak-rush is a grass-like plant 1-2 m tall with rather coarse leaves. Members of this family can be difficult to identify without careful examination of microscopic features and knowledge of general groups. Among the sedge genera with tubercled achenes (a tubercle is the persistent style base which remains on the achene like a little crown or horn); *Rhynchospora* differs in that its achenes are subtended by slender perianth bristles. Within the genus, *R. macrostachya* is distinguished from other Maine species by its large vegetative and reproductive parts - leaves 2-3 mm wide, achenes 3.5-5.5 mm topped by a tubercle over 1 cm in length.

**Ecological characteristics:** Ecological relationships in Maine are unknown.

**Phenology:** Fruits August to October.

**Family:** Cyperaceae

**Synonyms:** None noted.

**Known Distribution in Maine:** This rare plant has been documented from a total of 1 town(s) in the following county(ies): York.

**Reason(s) for rarity:** At northern limit of range; habitat naturally scarce.

**Conservation considerations:** This plant is restricted statewide to southern Maine, and populations are vulnerable to conversion of their habitat to residential or commercial use. It often grows in ponds where the water level fluctuates; maintain the hydrology of the ponds where it occurs.

### **Credits**

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