



GRASSES AND SEDGES IN THE FIELD: IDENTIFICATION, ECOLOGY, STRUCTURE, AND CONFIRMATION



2023 Eagle Hill Natural History Science Seminars on the coast of eastern Maine

Instructor: Brett Engstrom & Jerry Jenkins

When: July 2nd – July 8th, 2023

A course in the grasses and sedges of the Maine coast: who they are, how they are built, what they do, and how to identify them by leaves, flowers and fruits. And about the communities they live in: the processes generating habitats; the characteristic species, common and rare, in each habitat; and the way the species arrange themselves within the habitats and create ecological patterns. Taught at or near Eagle Hill, visiting rocky and cobble shores, a salt marsh, a rocky barren, and a coastal heath; and on a freshwater lake shore and in a shrub swamp and a freshwater marsh inland. Emphasizing close observation—field study, sketching, note taking—of the characteristic species in each habitat. We teach you describe, draw, and characterize grasses and sedges and their habitats in the field; to guess at identifications using the Northern Forest Atlas Guides and ecological maps; to confirm identifications using hand lenses and diagnostic characters; and to study and compare whole plants in the lab. And using a problem-based approach. We will treat the coastal communities as a new land and you as its first explorers, and ask you to discover, draw, and document what is there. We will take nothing — species lines, diagnostic characters, ecological relations — as given, and ask you to work them out for yourself. For anyone interested in a detailed look at grasses and sedges and their ecological relations. Some familiarity with grasses and sedges will help but is not a prerequisite. We will send out some pre-course lessons for everyone to get practiced up.

GENERAL INFO

CALENDAR

APPLY



about the instructors

Brett Engstrom (engstrombrett@gmail.com) is a survey biologist and ecologist from Marshfield, Vermont; he has over thirty years of field experience in the Northeast, and is an expert in the field identification of grasses and sedges. He is a long-time Atlas collaborator, the co-author of the Atlas photo-guide to grasses, and the editor of several other guides. He has loved grasses and sedges for almost as long as he can remember. It shows.

Jerry Jenkins (jerrycreejenkins@gmail.com) is a biologist and ecologist from White Creek, New York, with fifty-five years of professional experience in the Northern Forest Region, and the author of around 20 books and major reports on botany, resource geography, ecological history, and climate change. He founded the White Creek Field School in 1978, and, with Ed McNeil, the Northern Forest Atlas Project in 2012. He designs, writes, photographs, and illustrates the Atlas photo-guides and digital atlases; and is currently at work on the first two volumes of a new series of Atlas field guides, on woody plants and ecological patterns. You may see his work at www.northernforestatlas.org.