NOMENCLATURAL CHANGES IN THE POACEAE

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Diehanthelium (Panicum subg. Dichanthelium Hitchc. & Chase) is elevated to generic rank, with new name combinations for 17 species and three varieties. Erioneuron grandiflora and E. nealleyi are reduced to varietal rank under E. avenaceum. One new name combination in Elymus and one in Leptoloma are proposed.

In their monographic treatment of the North American species of Panicum, Hitchcock & Chase (Contr. U.S. Natl. Herb. 15: 1-396. 1910) recognized some 197 species, 110 of which they grouped in subgenus Dichanthelium. On the basis of current taxonomic investigations, it is becoming increasingly evident that the Dichanthelium grasses are a distinct generic group. Furthermore, it is apparent that many of the Dichanthelium species recognized by Hitchcock & Chase are relatively trivial morphological variants, not worthy of taxonomic recognition. In the most recent treatment of Texas grasses, Correll & Johnston (Manual of the Vascular Plants of Texas, Texas Research Foundation, 1970) recognized only 27 species of Dichanthelium panics in Texas as opposed to 53 reported by Chase in the 1950 edition of Hitchcock’s Manual of the Grasses of the United States. In a recent study of the group (unpublished) the writer was able to distinguish only 17 recognizable specific entities in the Texas flora.

The generic name Chasea of J. A. Nieuwland (Amer. Midl. Naturalist 2[3]: 60-65. 1911) has been given consideration as the proper name for the Dichanthelium taxon. It is apparent that Nieuwland intended that Chasea include all species conventionally referred to Panicum. The type for Chasea would thus be the same as the type of Panicum, viz. P. miliaceum L. Lacking a description, however, Chasea was not validly published according to Article 41 of the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature.

The following name changes in Dichanthelium, Erioneuron, and Elymus will be used in the publication Grasses of Texas, now in preparation by the author, and the new name combination in Leptoloma is for the writer’s contribution to the systematic grass treatment of the “Flora of Ceylon” project of the Smithsonian Institution.


1Technical Bulletin No. T.A. 10588, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, College Station, 77843.


*Dichanthelium linearifolium* (Scribn.) Gould, comb. nov., based on *Panicum linearifolium* Scribn. in Britt. & Brown Illust. Fl. 3: 500. 1898. 


*Dichanthelium oligosanthes* (Schult.) Gould, comb. nov., based on *Panicum oligosanthes* Schult. Mant. 2: 256. 1824. 


