

BLUE-EYED GRASS

Sisyrinchium spp.

By Helen Hamilton, *President of the John Clayton Chapter, VNPS*

Not a grass, but a member of the Iris Family, this little blue flower has a yellow eye; each of the six petal-like parts has a bristle tip. Leaves are narrow and grasslike, 6-18 inches tall. Flower color ranges from pale blue to deep blue-violet, the flower size from ¼" to ¾" wide. Small round fruits appear in summer.

Blue-eyed grass does best in full sun to partial shade, preferring good, moist, well-drained soil. When massed, they are attractive in leaf but even more charming in bloom. The plants look great in a rock garden or along a border and can naturalize in the lawn. Propagation is by seed or division; they will self-seed, but not aggressively.

Five species are found in eastern Virginia, two of which grow in nearly every county. Blue-eyed Grass is found in meadows, ditches, grassy places, and damp woods over eastern U.S. and Canada. The genus name is taken from an old word for "a bulbous plant", which this is. ❖

