Common Plants of Riparian Areas - East CentralTexas

With Wetland Indicator (WI) and Proposed Stability Rating (SR)

Sedges / Grasses	WI	SR
Spikerushes (most sp.)	OBL	6
Emory sedge	OBL	9
Sawgrass	OBL	9
Rice cutgrass	OBL	6
Southern wildrice	OBL	9
Water bentgrass	OBL	5
Cattail	OBL	9
Bulrushes (most)	OBL	9
Porcupine sedge	OBL	5
Knotgrass	FACW	6
Hairyseed paspalum	FACW	6
Florida paspalum	FACW	6
Bushy bluestem	FACW	5
Common reed	FACW	9
Flatsedges (most)	FACW	5
White top sedge	FACW	5/6
Rushes (most) OBL or	FACW	5/7
Aparejograss	FACW	6
Barnyardgrass	FACW	4
Rabbitsfoot grass *	FACW	3
Carolina canarygrass	FACW	3
Switchgrass	FAC	9
Eastern gammagrass	FAC	9
Lindheimer muhly	FAC	7
Wildrye	FAC	5
White tridens	FAC	5
Vine-mesquite	FAC	6
Seep muhly	FAC	6
Broadleaf Uniola	FAC	6
Dallisgrass *	FAC	7
Vaseygrass *	FAC	5
Rustyseed paspalum	FAC	5
Giant reed (Arundo)*	FAC	9
St Augustine grass *	FAC	5
Knotroot bristlegrass	FAC	4
Indiangrass	FACU	7
Johnsongrass *	FACU	6
Bermudagrass *	FACU	5
Dichanthelium (most)	FACU	4
Southwestern bristle	UPL	5
King Ranch bluestem *	UPL	5
Bulb panicum	UPL	8

*Indicates Introduced Species

SR - Stability Ratings are on a scale of 1 – 10. The Stability Rating concept was developed by Al Winward, retired USFS Ecologist GTR-47. Bare ground has a SR of 1. Anchored rock or logs have a SR of 10. A SR of 7 is considered the minimum for acceptable bank stability in the Hill Country while an SR of 6 is acceptable in the Blacklands. Woody plants, when associated with stabilizing grasses and sedges provide stability higher than what is indicated.

Forbs	WI	SR
Water willow	OBL	7
Water primrose	OBL	3
Watercress *	OBL	3
Scouring rush	OBL	6
Marsh fleabane	OBL	5
Smooth bidens	OBL	5
Water hyssop	OBL	3
Pennywort	OBL	3
Water hemlock	OBL	6
Monkeyflower	OBL	3
Cardinalflower	FACW	5
Tall aster	FACW	5
Spiny aster	FACW	8
Large buttercup	FACW	6
Bog nettle	FACW	5
Dock (most)	FACW	5
Mint *	FACW	3
Smallhead sneezeweed	FACW	3
Sesbania	FACW	3
Poison hemlock*	FACW	5
Frogfruit	FAC	4
Late boneset	FAC	5
Dogbane	FAC	7
Ironweed	FAC	5
Shield fern	FAC	6
Giant ragweed	FAC	3
Annual sumpweed	FAC	3
Brazilian verbena *	FAC	4
Cocklebur	FAC	3
Tall goldenrod	FACU	6
Common ragweed	FACU	2
Frostweed	FACU	6
Maximilian sunflower	FACU	6
Clammyweed	FACU	3
Castor bean *	FACU	3
Western ragweed	UPL	5
Turk's cap	UPL	5
Toothed goldeneye	UPL	5

WI - Wetland Indicator Categories

OBL *Obligate Wetland* These plants are very indicative of wet soil conditions and/or a high water table.
FACW *Facultative Wetland* These plants usually grow in wet and seasonally moist areas
FAC *Facultative* These plants can tolerate wet conditions as well as periodically dry condions.
FACU *Facultative Upland* These plants do not tolerate very wet conditions and are indicative of dry locations.
UPL *Obligate Upland* Thse plants almost always occur in non wet areas

Woody	WI	SR
Buttonbush	OBL	8
Bald Cypress	OBL	10
Indigobush amorpha	OBL	7
Black willow	FACW	7
Arroyo willow	FACW	7
Green ash	FACW	6
Spiny aster	FACW	8
Box elder maple	FACW	6/7
Possum haw	FACW	6
Salt cedar	FACW	7
Sycamore	FAC	6
Eastern cottonwood	FAC	7
Pecan	FAC	6
Little walnut	FAC	7/8
Roosevelt baccharis	FAC	6
American elder	FAC	6
Roughleaf dogwood	FAC	6
Sugar hackberry	FAC	5
American elm	FAC	6
Cedar elm	FAC	6
Oaks	FAC	6
Lindheimer indigo	FAC	5
Wafer ash (Ptelea)	FAC	6
Dewberry	FAC	4
Greenbriar	FAC	5
Poison ivy	FAC	5
Grape vine (most)	FAC	5
Japanese honeysuckle *	FAC	6
Netleaf hackberry	FACU	5
Red mulberry	FACU	6
Mesquite	FACU	5
Huisache	FACU	5
Western soapberry	FACU	6
Bumelia	FACU	6
Black walnut	FACU	6
Carolina snailseed	FACU	4
Chinese tallow *	FACU	6
American beautyberry	FACU	4
Osage orange	UPL	6
Gravelbar bricklebush	UPL	5
Slender bricklebush	UPL	5
Whitebrush	UPL	6
Juniper	UPL	5
Mexican persimmon	UPL	5
Vitex *	UPL	6
Ligustrum *	UPL	6
Chinese privet *	UPL	6
Chinaberry *	UPL	5

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What is a Functional Creek?

Creeks and riparian areas function properly when there is:
Adequate Vegetation, Landscape formations, or Large wood to:

→ Dissipate stream energy
→ Protect banks / stabilize channel
→ Reduce erosion
→ Slow the velocity of floodwaters
→ Sediment dropped
→ Sediment trapped, and stabilized
→ Build floodplains
→ Provide floodwater retention
→ Enlarge riparian sponge
→ Improve groundwater recharge
→ More water for sustained base-flow

Results:
- Improved water quality
- Sustained flow over time
- Increased forage for livestock
- Excellent fish and wildlife habitat

How:
- Smaller pastures; Rotational grazing
- Riparian pastures; Abbreviated grazing periods; Long rest periods
- Off site water for livestock; Offsite salt, minerals and feeding
- Retain tall dense vegetation with good stabilizing root mass
- Reduced human traffic, Limited mowing, Light grazing

Key Points:
- Slow the water down with dense vegetation
- Keep water on the land longer
- Think Water-catchment, not Water-shed