

TAXONOMIC CHANGE IN *WILLKOMMIA* (POACEAE: CHLORIDOIDEAE)

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ABSTRACT

The endemic South American taxon *Willkommia texana* Hitchc. var. *stolonifera* Parodi is elevated to the rank of species; ***Willkommia stolonifera* (Parodi) Wipff, comb. & stat. nov.**

RESUMEN

El taxón endémico sudamericano *Willkommia texana* Hitchc. var. *stolonifera* Parodi se eleva al rango de especie; ***Willkommia stolonifera* (Parodi) Wipff, comb. & stat. nov.**

INTRODUCTION

Willkommia Hack. is a small global genus of 4 species. Three species are found in the Old World: southwest Africa, and one species in the New World (POWO 2026). *Willkommia texana* Hitchc. sensu lato has traditionally been treated as occurring in Texas and South America. The relationship between these two allopatrically distributed populations was re-evaluated in preparation for the upcoming revision of the *Guide to Texas Grasses* (Wipff & Shaw in prep.). Hitchcock (1903) described *Willkommia texana* Hitchc. as endemic to Texas. *Note:* One historic collection reported by Featherly (1938) from Oklahoma (Muskogee Co., from the Soil Conservation Service [SCS], Watson K-462, Jul 1937) is deposited in the U.S. National Herbarium (US), but this collection was never mentioned by Hitchcock (1951). Waterfall (1979) and Fishbein et al. (2024) also did not list *W. texana* as occurring in Oklahoma. Since no additional collections have been documented from northeast Oklahoma and this historic collection probably represents a voucher from an SCS grass garden, *W. texana* is not considered present in Oklahoma.

Parodi (1925) described a new variety of *W. texana* from South America (Argentina), *Willkommia texana* var. *stolonifera* Parodi, as a caespitose perennial with clearly visible stolons, whereas var. *texana* is not stoloniferous. Herter (1952, 1953, 1958) was the first to recognize the two varieties at the rank of species, but they were recognized in the genus *Willbleibia* Herter (nom. illeg. superfl.). Morphologically, *W. texana* var. *stolonifera* is readily distinguished from var. *texana* by habit, shorter plant height, shorter and usually narrower leaf blades, apex of the lemma, and panicle length (see key below). Also, the allopatric distribution—the geographical isolation of the South American (Argentina and Uruguay) from the North American (United States: Texas) population—further supports their distinctness. Thus the following new combination is needed.

***Willkommia stolonifera* (Parodi) Wipff, comb. & stat. nov.** BASIONYM: *Willkommia texana* Hitchc. var. *stolonifera* Parodi, Physis (Buenos Aires) 8(28):78. 1925. *Craspedorhachis texana* (Hitchc.) Pilg. var. *stolonifera* (Parodi) Pilg., Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 74:27. 1945 [1947]. *Willbleibia stolonifera* (Parodi) Herter, Revista Sudamer. Bot. 9:85. 1952. TYPE: **SOUTH AMERICA. Argentina.** Buenos Aires: Pipinas (F.C.S.), Habita tierras calcareas, 25 Mar 1923, L. Parodi 4975 (HOLOTYPE: SI-image!; ISOTYPE: US-1024458-image!).

Willkommia stolonifera, endemic to South America, is only known from a few collections and is considered rare. The known collections are from Argentina and Uruguay. **ARGENTINA: Province of Buenos Aires:** Parodi 4975 (SI, US) and Burkart 1282 (SI); and **Province of Santa Fe:** Pensiero 345 (SF) and Pensiero 346 (SF). **URUGUAY: Rivera Department:** Rosengurtt B-6951 (MVFA); but recently additional collections have been made in the Río Negro Department, close to the Uruguay River (Ary Mailhos [MVFA], pers. comm.).

KEY TO *WILLKOMMIA* IN THE NEW WORLD

1. Plants stoloniferous; culms decumbent; longer leaf blades $\leq 4(-10)$ cm long, 0.5–1.5 mm wide; lemma midvein prolonged into a short mucro; plants 20–40 cm tall; inflorescence 4–15 cm long; endemic to Argentina and Uruguay (South America) _____ ***Willkommia stolonifera***
1. Plants without stolons; culms erect; longer leaf blades 6–21 cm long, 2–3.5 mm wide; lemma midvein usually not excurrent; plants (17–)20–65 cm tall; inflorescence 7–44 cm long; endemic to Texas (U.S.A.) _____ ***Willkommia texana***

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