



# AMPHIPOGON STRICTUS

## Long Greybeard Grass

Perennial, erect or slightly kned at the base, usually 25–35 cm high at maturity. *Culms* arising singly and closely from a short, horizontal rhizome, slender, smooth or slightly rough, the upper internodes greatly exceeding the sheaths. *Nodes* usually about 3, smooth. *Leaves* both basal and on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* close around the culms, smooth or slightly rough, persisting at the base. *Ligule* a short rim of hairs. *Leaf blades* rigid, sharply pointed, narrowly infolded, in some forms very short, 1–5 cm, but sometimes up to 15 cm long, about 1 mm wide when folded.

*Inflorescence* a short, cylindrical, spike-like panicle, 1–2 cm long and about 5 mm wide. *Spikelets* (S) often rather dark-coloured, slightly overlapping in the head, few (usually 2) on very short pedicels on the very contracted panicle branches, 8–12 mm long, breaking up at maturity above the persistent glumes. *Florets* 1, bisexual, but the lower spikelets sometimes sterile. *Glumes* (G<sub>1</sub>, G<sub>2</sub>) slightly unequal, 3-nerved, membranous, sometimes slightly hairy, partly enclosing the spikelet; the lower glume (G<sub>1</sub>) about 4–6 mm; the upper (G<sub>2</sub>) about 5–7 mm. *Lemma* (L) 8–12 mm long (including lobes, teeth and callus), deeply 2-cleft into 3 pointed lobes, the points produced into short bristles; distinctly 3-nerved, the nerves produced into the teeth; hairy on the lower part of the back along the nerves with 1 row of stiff hairs associated with each of the lateral nerves and 2 along the central nerve, becoming rigid at maturity, with the margins produced into thin flaps, broadly enclosing the flower. *Palea* (P) deeply 1-cleft into 2 narrow teeth, which also have bristles produced from them; narrow, almost as long as the lemma, without hairs. *Anthers* 3, 3.5–4 mm long.

This is a species of rather poor, rocky or degraded sites in lower rainfall areas and on granite country. It is fairly widespread, though not usually common, in the more western parts of southern Queensland. Vickery (1950a) describes several varieties within each of the two species outlined here. These are three within *A. strictus* occurring in our region, which are distinguished by characters of the silky hairs on the back of the lemma (Simon, 1980a).

### REFERENCES

Bailey (1902),<sup>1</sup> p. 1879; Vickery (1950a),<sup>2</sup> (Key to Australian species); Gardner (1952),<sup>3</sup> pp. 134–39; Lazarides (1970),<sup>4</sup> p. 40; Willis (1970),<sup>5</sup> p. 152; Beadle *et al.* (1972),<sup>6</sup> p. 659; Black (1978),<sup>7</sup> p. 175; Jessop (1981),<sup>8</sup> p. 447.

### KEY TO SPECIES

Inflorescence 2–4, rarely up to 6 cm long, cylindrical, narrow.  
Lemma bristles hairy to tip. Plant 20–50 cm high, tufted or with rhizome very short (greybeard grass)

*A. caricinus*<sup>2,3,4,5,7,8</sup>

Inflorescence 1–2 cm long, narrowly oval. Lemma bristles with hairs becoming shorter towards tips. Plant 25–35 cm high, culms arising from very obvious horizontal rhizome (long greybeard grass)

*A. strictus*<sup>1,2,3,5,6,7</sup>