



DICHELACHNE CRINITA

Long-hair Plume Grass

A sparsely tufted, perennial grass, 50–100 cm tall, green or bluish-green in colour. *Culms* erect, unbranched, hairless. *Nodes* hairless. *Leaves* basal and on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* shorter than the internodes, hairless to covered with short hairs. *Ligule* membranous, 1 mm long. *Leaf blades* up to 20 cm long, 3–5 mm wide, hairless to densely covered with short hairs, particularly on the back.

Inflorescence a dense spike-like panicle, 8–20 cm long, slender before maturity with the awns erect, but these later spreading and slightly spiralling. *Spikelets* (S) all alike, numerous and overlapping on the short panicle branches, about 5 mm long excluding the awn, disarticulating at maturity above the glumes. *Florets* 1, bisexual, with a tuft of hairs. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) similar, slightly unequal, about 5 mm long, slender, acutely pointed and keeled, slightly rough down the keel. *Lemma* (L) shorter than the glumes, the tip rounded, thinly membranous and easily splitting, 1-nerved, a fine awn 20–25 cm long, arising $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ the way up the back. *Palea* (P) thinly membranous with 2 close nerves, about $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the lemma. *Anthers* 3, 0.5 mm long.

The grass is of limited distribution in southeast Queensland, being found on the Bunya Mountains and on Moreton Island. *D. micrantha*, on the other hand, is more commonly found. It is a winter-growing species and is distinguished by its less dense inflorescence (see illustration opposite).

REFERENCES

Bailey (1902),¹ pp. 1884–85; Vickery (1950b),² pp. 337–38; Gardner (1952),³ pp. 151–52; Burbidge and Gray (1970),⁴ pp. 47–48; Willis (1970),⁵ pp. 137–38; Beadle *et al.* (1972),⁶ p. 655; Black (1978),⁷ pp. 176–78; Simon (1982).⁸

KEY TO SPECIES

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| 1. Panicle rather to densely spike-like, with many spikelets. | 2 |
| Panicle loose with few spikelets; awns usually with a double bend. Mountains of Stanthorpe area. | 3 |
| 2. Panicle very dense; awns 2.5 cm long, dense and almost concealing spikelet (long-hair plume grass) | <i>D. crinita</i> ^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} |
| Panicle rather loose initially, becoming dense with maturity; awns 12–16 mm long (short-hair plume grass) (see illustration opposite) | <i>D. micrantha</i> ^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} (<i>sciurea</i>) |
| 3. Plants up to 35 cm tall, inflorescence 3–8 cm. | <i>D. parva</i> ⁸ |
| Plants up to 1 m tall, inflorescence 10–35 cm. | <i>D. rara</i> ^{2,4,6,7} |