



X4.2



G₁



G₂



L



P

DIPLACHNE PARVIFLORA

Beetle Grass

A tufted, erect, perennial grass, smooth and hairless, up to 80 cm tall. *Culms* erect, drooping over in the upper part, branching at the nodes. *Nodes* prominent, hairless. *Leaves* mostly basal. *Leaf sheaths* loose, smooth, striate, hairless, often much exceeding the lower internodes, frequently purplish towards the base. *Ligule* prominent, membranous, often jagged, 1.5–2 mm long. *Leaf blades* rolled inwards, up to 5 mm wide and 20 cm long, pointed, smooth, hairless, rather lax.

Inflorescence an open panicle, 20–30 cm long, with numerous, erect or spreading primary branches or racemes with 15 or more almost sessile spikelets along their length, rather lax. *Spikelets* (S) 6–8 mm long, all similar, breaking up and falling free of the more or less persistent glumes at maturity. *Florets* 5–7, all similar, bisexual, somewhat overlapping in the spikelet. *Glumes* (G₁, G₂) dissimilar, both 1-nerved and pointed; the lower glume (G₁) 2 mm long; the upper (G₂) 3 mm long and broader. *Lemmas* (L) slightly longer than G₂, 3-nerved, the lateral nerves close to the margin and running into 2 distinct lateral points, the apex also slightly 2-pointed, a minute awn or bristle continuous with the mid-nerve arising from the base of the notch, bands of quite dense, silky hairs on the lower half of the back down the mid-rib. *Paleas* (P) slightly shorter, rounded on the sides and tip, strongly 2-keeled, the backs of the keels densely silky-hairy along their length. *Anthems* 3, 0.5 mm long.

The grass is widespread in southern Queensland, though not generally common. It extends from the moist coastal area into the drier inland. Although grazed, it is obviously not an important forage grass.

REFERENCES

Bailey (1902),¹ p. 1913; Gardner (1952),² pp. 110–11; Lazarides (1970),³ pp. 108–13; Willis (1970),⁴ pp. 155–56; Beadle *et al.* (1972),⁵ pp. 643–44; Black (1978),⁶ pp. 188–89; Jessop (1981),⁷ pp. 461–62.

KEY TO SPECIES

1. Spikelets with 5–9 (usually 5–6) florets, usually not exceeding 8 mm long; light green in colour. Widespread (beetle grass) *D. parviflora*^{2,3,6,7}
Spikelets with 8–14 florets, 8–20 mm long. 2
2. Lemma tip with short awn, not or barely exceeding blunt lateral lobes; spikelets dull green, becoming pale at maturity. Western (brown beetle grass) *D. muelleri*^{1,2,6,7}
Lemma tip with short awn distinctly exceeding pointed lateral lobes; spikelets dark green. Widespread (brown beetle grass) *D. reptatrix*^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7}
(*fusca*)