



EHRHARTA ERECTA

Panic Veldtgrass

A weakly tufted perennial up to 90 cm tall. *Culms* more or less prostrate at the base, becoming erect, branching and sometimes rooting at the lower nodes. *Nodes* numerous, usually hairless, pigmented. *Leaves* green, mostly on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* loose, striate, green to straw-coloured, becoming papery, smooth. *Ligule* membranous, up to 3 mm long at the centre. *Leaf blades* flat, soft, not rigid, 5–15 cm long, up to 10 mm wide, the margins often finely undulate and rough downwards.

Inflorescence a narrow panicle, erect or nodding, 5–20 cm long, many-branched or reduced to a single raceme. *Spikelets* (S) solitary, all similar, on slender pedicels, one to several per branch, 3–4 mm long, pale green, at maturity disarticulating above the persistent glumes. *Florets* 3, the lower 2 sterile, the upper bisexual. *Glumes* (G₁, G₂) unequal, papery-membranous, more or less weakly 5-nerved; the lower glume (G₁) 1/3 to 1/2 spikelet length; the upper (G₂) 2/3 spikelet length, broader than G₁. *Lemmas* (L₁, L₂, L₃) somewhat hardened and glistening, each with a hinge-like basal appendage, finely 5-nerved, dissimilar in shape; L₁ about 3/4 spikelet length, truncate-rounded at the tip; rounded on the back; L₂ the length of the spikelet, rounded on the back and distinctly transversely ridged on the upper half, rounded at the tip, slightly hairy on the margin at the base; L₃ broader, less rigid and slightly shorter than L₂, laterally flattened and slightly keeled down the mid-vein. *Palea* (P₃) 2-nerved and 2-keeled, the nerves close together and rough on the back in the lower part, strongly laterally flattened; P₁ and P₂ absent. *Anthers* 6, 1 mm long, yellow.

This naturalized grass from southern Africa may be encountered in southeastern Queensland on the Darling Downs and in the Moreton District. It is an uncommon grass of shady places, such as gardens, and in sandy situations.

REFERENCES

Gardner (1952),¹ pp. 16-21; Chippindall (1955),² p. 40; Burbidge and Gray (1970),³ p. 62; Willis (1970),⁴ pp. 89-90; Beadle *et al.* (1972),⁵ p. 661; Vickery (1975),⁶ pp. 293-97; Black (1978),⁷ pp. 97-99.

KEY TO SPECIES

Spikelets 7–30 mm long; lemmas awned (annual veldtgrass)

E. longiflora^{1,2,4,5,6,7}

Spikelets 2–4 mm long; lemmas awnless and distinctly rounded at tip (panic veldtgrass)

E. erecta^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7}