

S
X2.5

G₁

G₂

L
X4.5

P



ELEUSINE INDICA

Crow's-foot Grass

A coarse, tufted annual, 30–60 cm tall. *Culms* ascending or prostrate, smooth, compressed, branching at the base, striate. *Nodes* up to 8, smooth, hairless. *Leaves* shining, green, well distributed. *Leaf sheaths* smooth, flattened and keeled, slightly hairy along the margins in the upper part and around the mouth, striate, becoming loose. *Ligule* a ring of short hairs on a short membrane. *Leaf blades* linear, folded, particularly towards the base, becoming flat in older leaves, 3–8 mm broad, smooth, but slightly hairy on the margins near the base, narrowing into a bluntish tip.

Inflorescence usually of 2–6 spikes arranged digitately or subdigitately at the tip of the culm, sessile, the spikes all 4–15 cm long, usually one spike attached below the whorl containing the others, the axes prominently flattened with the spikelets loosely overlapping in 2 rows on the underside. *Spikelets* (S) sessile on the axis, laterally compressed, 3–4 mm long, at maturity not falling entire but disarticulating above the persistent glumes and between the florets. *Florets* 3–5, all bisexual. *Glumes* (G₁, G₂) narrow, unequal, membranous, keeled; the lower glume (G₁) 1-nerved, slightly less than half the spikelet length; the upper (G₂) acutely pointed, 3-nerved, slightly more than ½ the spikelet length. *Lemmas* (L) all similar, membranous, rather acutely pointed, strongly 1-keeled, 3 mm long, 3-nerved. *Paleas* (P) slightly shorter than the lemmas, 2-nerved and 2-keeled. *Anthems* 3, about 0.5 mm long.

This is a widespread introduced weed grass of waste places and cultivation in southern Queensland, as it is throughout the tropics and subtropics. It becomes particularly abundant in disturbed habitats. Flowering early in the season after rains, it is of little forage value. *E. tristachya* is uncommon and restricted to some coastal areas.

REFERENCES

Bailey (1902),¹ p. 1898; Gardner (1952),² p. 207; Burbidge and Gray (1970),³ p. 33; Willis (1970),⁴ p. 157; Beadle *et al.* (1972),⁵ p. 644; Black (1978),⁶ pp. 189-90; Jessop (1981),⁷ p. 462.

KEY TO SPECIES

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| Spikes short, up to 3 cm long. Spikelets densely crowded on spikes. Short weedy annual up to 20 cm high. Restricted to coastal and southern southeast Queensland (goose grass) | <i>E. tristachya</i> ^{3,4,5,6} |
| Spikes 4–15 cm long. Spikelets loosely overlapping on spikes. Widespread weedy annual, 30–60 cm tall (crow's-foot grass) | <i>E. indica</i> ^{1,2,3,5,6,7} |