



ELIONURUS CITREUS

Lemon-scented Grass

An erect moderately slender perennial. *Culms* up to 100 cm high, smooth, hairless, unbranched below, but branched from the upper nodes at flowering. *Nodes* several, slightly enlarged and pigmented, not hairy. *Leaves* mostly basal, but some on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* loose, not exceeding the internodes at maturity, smooth, hairless, striate, without blades in the upper part of the culm and sheathing the developing spikes like a spathe. *Ligule* a rim of short hairs. *Leaf blades* narrow, particularly the basal ones, 2–3 mm wide and up to 40 cm long, smooth, hairless, striate, flexuous, absent or minute on the upper sheaths of the culm.

Inflorescence a series of simple racemes 3–12 cm long on fairly slender stalks eventually exerted from the spathe-like leaf sheaths, which arise singly or severally from the upper culm nodes. *Spikelets* (S_1 , S_2) very dissimilar in form and sex, in pairs, one sessile, the other pedicellate, closely overlapping in 2 rows along the jointed axis, both distinctly hairy; at maturity both the spikelets and the joints disarticulating, with the spikelets falling entire with the glumes. *Florets* 2; in the sessile spikelet, the lower floret neuter and reduced to a lemma, the upper floret bisexual; in the pedicellate spikelet, both florets reduced, lemmas absent. *Sessile spikelet* (S_1) fertile, flattened on the back, the base with a triangular callus 1.5 mm long and tufted with white, stiff hairs. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) very dissimilar; the lower glume (G_1) 10–12 mm long with a dense fringe of long, erect, stiff white hairs around the keeled margin, which clasps the margin of the upper glume, 9-nerved, the tip produced into 2 long, beak-like teeth; the upper (G_2) $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ the length of G_1 , thinly membranous, 3-nerved, faintly and shortly hairy on the lower part of the back. *Lemma* (L_1) of the lower sterile floret about $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of G_2 , thinly membranous, nerveless, slightly hairy at the tip. *Palea* absent. *Lemma* (L_2) of the upper fertile floret similar, but slightly shorter. *Palea* absent. *Anthers* 3, 1.5 mm long. *Pedicellate spikelet* (S_2) 8–10 mm long, neuter and reduced to the 2 glumes only, the pedicel flat and concave, densely covered on one side with long, stiff hairs. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) very dissimilar; the lower (G_1) asymmetrical, usually standing out from the spikelet, 1-keeled and fringed along the keel with stiff white hairs, indistinctly nerved; the upper (G_2) slightly shorter, 3–5-nerved, symmetrical and hairless.

The grass is not very common in southern Queensland, being mainly of northern distribution. It comes into the northern part of the region, where it may be locally abundant in sandy soil along rivers and in coastal areas and sand dunes. When crushed, it gives out a lemon scent.

REFERENCE

Bailey (1902), p. 1860.

KEY TO SPECIES

Only one species occurs in southern Queensland.