



EULALIA FULVA

Silky Browntop Grass

A somewhat tufted, erect perennial, of variable stature from 0.4–1.3 m in height. *Culms* arising from a short, scaly, rhizomatous or bulbous base, the buds often with silky hairs, branching at the base, smooth and hairless. *Nodes* hairless or slightly bearded. *Leaves* green, reddish or bluish, both basal and on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* hairless or sometimes hairy at the base, smooth, striate. *Ligule* membranous, jagged, truncate, with long hairs on the margins. *Leaf blades* flat, rather narrow (2–4 mm), up to 30 cm long, tapering to fine points, some scattered, silky hairs often present on the upper surface.

long, arranged digitately or subdigitately and together; the most striking feature of the grass is the densely hairy inflorescence, which is red-brown in colour. *Spikelets* (S) in pairs along either side of the raceme, 4–5 mm long, all similar, one sessile, the other shortly pedicelled, both bisexual, the whole raceme readily breaking up at maturity with the spikelets disarticulating below the glumes and falling entire or together with joints and pedicels, the axil and pedicels also densely hairy. *Florets* 1 or 2 in both spikelets, the lower reduced to an empty lemma or absent, the upper bisexual. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) slightly unequal; the lower glume (G_1) the length of the spikelet, faintly 5-nerved, truncate, densely hairy on the back; the upper (G_2) slightly shorter, narrower, faintly 3-nerved, truncate. *Lemma* and *palea* of the lower sterile floret usually missing; when the lemma is present, it is very small and membranous. *Lemma* (L_2) of the fertile floret produced into a fine, twisted awn 10–12 mm long, the lower part reduced to a strap-like membranous base with 2 horns bearing a tuft of hairs on each. *Palea* usually absent or, if present, minute. *Anthers* 3, 2.5 mm long.

This is a distinctive grass when in flower, owing to the fluffy, dark brown inflorescence. It is found in the drier parts of southern Queensland, extending into western, central and northern Queensland and the northwest of New South Wales. It is palatable to stock, but in the far north, rapidly becomes rank and unpalatable in the wet season.

REFERENCES

Bailey (1902),¹ p. 1825 (as *Pollinia fulva*); Henrard (1940),² p. 453; Gardner (1952),³ p. 314; Vickery (1961),⁴ pp. 26–27; Lazarides (1970),⁵ p. 168; Willis (1970),⁶ pp. 208–9; Black (1978),⁷ p. 244; Jessop (1981),⁸ p. 490.

KEY TO SPECIES

Subcoastal grass. Racemes more than 5. Inflorescence hairy, pale brown.

*E. trispicata*²

Inland grass. Racemes less than 5. Inflorescence densely hairy, dark brown (silky browntop grass)

E. fulva^{1,3,4,5,6,7,8}