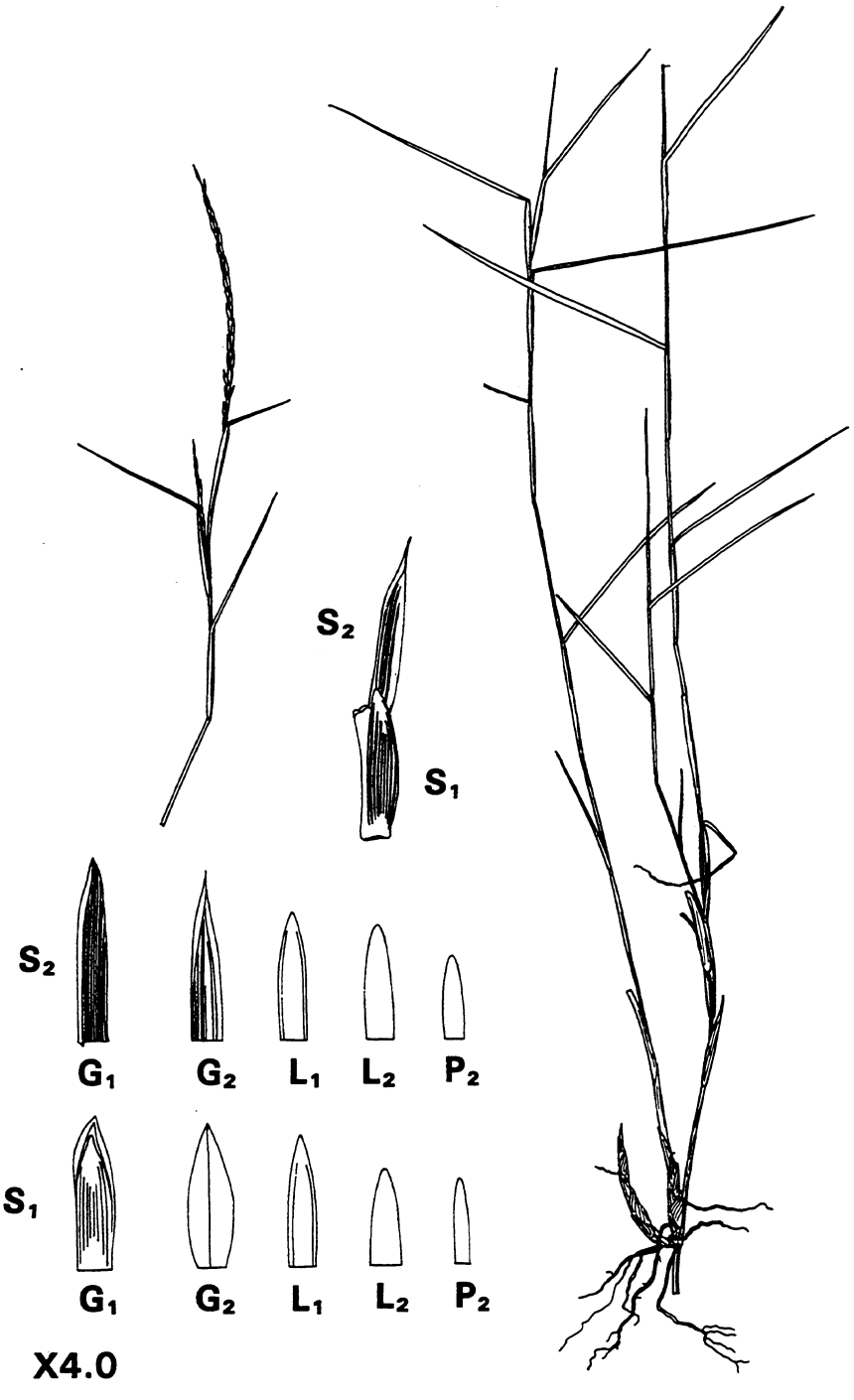
S2
S1
S2
G1
G2
L1
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P2
S1
G1
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X4.0

HEMARTHRIA UNCINATA
Mat Grass

A somewhat rigid, erect perennial. *Culms* 30–100 cm tall, arising from a creeping root stock and often forming considerable mats in damp areas; smooth, branched at the upper nodes. *Nodes* pigmented, hairless. *Leaves* mostly on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* loose, shorter than the internodes, the basal ones striate, hairless. *Ligule* a rim of hairs, which are longer on the margins. *Leaf blades* flat, pointed, hairless, 2–4 mm wide, up to 15 cm long.

Inflorescence a single, curved raceme, at first enclosed by and later exserted from the enlarged leaf sheath, breaking up at maturity and falling entire as individual spikelet pairs; subsequent to the formation of the terminal raceme, axillary racemes may be formed from successively lower nodes. *Spikelets* (S_1, S_2) more or less similar, closely adpressed to the axis, one sessile, the other pedicellate, with the pedicel and joint fused and adhering to the upper glume of the sessile spikelet. *Florets* 2 in both spikelets, the lower floret sterile and reduced to a lemma, the upper bisexual. *Sessile spikelet* (S_1) 6–10 mm long. *Glumes* (G_1, G_2) asymmetrical; the lower glume (G_1) faintly but many-nerved, thick, one margin with a keeled wing, the point sometimes hooked; the upper (G_2) about the same length, 1-nerved, not as thick, fused along one side to the pedicel of the pedicellate spikelet. *Lemma* (L_1) of the lower sterile floret, membranous, 2-nerved. *Palea* absent. *Lemma* (L_2) of the upper fertile floret slightly shorter than L_1, nerveless, thinly membranous. *Palea* (P_2) similar to L_2, shorter. *Anthers* 3, 1 mm long. *Pedicellate spikelet* (S_2) slightly longer, narrower and more sharply pointed. *Glumes* (G_1, G_2) dissimilar; the lower glume (G_1) asymmetrical, thick, many-nerved; the upper (G_2) membranous, 1- or partly several-nerved. *Lemmas* (L_1, L_2) *palea* (P_2) and *anthers* as for the sessile spikelet.

The grass is locally abundant on the coast, where it often forms dense mats adjacent to water in estuarine areas. A taller form may be found in the sandy beds and lower terraces of inland rivers. However, it is of limited forage value.

REFERENCES

Bailey (1902), pp. 1859–60 (as *H. compressa*); Gardner (1952), p. 306; Vickery (1961), pp. 17–18; Burbidge and Gray (1970), p. 70; Willis (1970), p. 207; Beadle *et al.* (1972), p. 674; Black (1978), p. 244.

KEY TO SPECIES

Only one species is at present recognized, but it is not certain if the two forms mentioned above should be considered the same species (see Vickery, 1961).