



HIEROCHLOE RARIFLORA

Scented Holygrass

A rather densely tufted perennial, which is faintly sweetly scented, deep green to slightly reddish in colour, 60–100 cm tall at maturity. *Culms* erect to somewhat spreading, rather rigid, smooth, often branched at the lower nodes, internodes often exceeding the leaf sheaths, the lower ones becoming rather stout. *Nodes* numerous, smooth. *Leaves* mostly on the culms, the lower blades breaking off near the sheath. *Leaf sheaths* becoming loose, smooth, striate. *Ligule* a short membranous rim about 1 mm long. *Leaf blades* 3–9 mm broad, long and gradually tapering to a fine point from below the middle, flat, slightly rough along the margins, otherwise smooth.

Inflorescence a short, fairly open panicle up to 10 cm long and 3–8 cm broad. *Spikelets* (S) 5 mm long, greenish straw-coloured to faintly reddish, borne singly on slender, longish pedicels, breaking up at maturity above the persistent glumes. *Florets* 3, the uppermost bisexual, the 2 lower ones male. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) slightly unequal, hairless, broad, 3–4 mm long; the lower glume (G_1) 1–3-nerved, the upper (G_2) 3-nerved. *Lemmas* of the lower male florets (L_1 , L_2) similar, 4 mm long, rather broad, fringed along the margin in the lower half with a row of short hairs. *Paleas* (P_1 , P_2) slightly shorter than the lemmas, strongly 2-keeled and 2-nerved, rough down the back of the keels. *Anthers* 2–3, 2.5 mm long. *Lemma* of the fertile floret (L_3) about the same length as the others, 5-nerved, without marginal hairs, more or less membranous and more or less enclosing the fertile floret. *Palea* (P_3) almost the length of the lemma, 1-nerved and somewhat 1-keeled, membranous. *Anthers* 2, 2 mm long.

This grass is rare in southern Queensland, being found in a few heath and open eucalyptus forest areas in the McPherson Ranges and near Stanthorpe. It is of no significance as a forage grass.

REFERENCES

White (1938), p. 81; Jones (1964); Burbidge and Gray (1970), p. 62; Willis (1970), p. 133; Beadle *et al.* (1972), p. 660; Vickery (1975), pp. 277–82.

KEY TO SPECIES

Only one species occurs in southern Queensland.