



LAGURUS OVATUS

Hare's-Tail Grass

A softly hairy annual, 5–60 cm tall, single or multi-culmed and tufted. *Culms* erect or decumbent at the base, slender, branching from or near the base. *Nodes* few, not conspicuous, hairless. *Leaves* greyish-green, mainly on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* loose, rounded on the back, often longer than the internodes, smooth, softly hairy. *Ligule* a blunt membranous rim, 1.5–3 mm long, hairy. *Leaf blades* flat, softly hairy, 1–20 cm long, 2–14 mm wide, tapering gradually to a point from near the base.

Inflorescence a dense, ovoid to oblong, cylindrical, contracted panicle, 1–7 cm long and 6–20 mm wide, softly hairy with longer, bristly hairs, erect, but later nodding, pale, occasionally tinged with purple. *Spikelets* (S) similar, densely overlapping, breaking up at maturity above the persistent glumes, 8–10 mm long. *Floret* 1, bisexual. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) equal the length of the spikelet, membranous, narrowly lanceolate, 1-nerved, tapering gradually to a fine bristle, the back and along the bristle covered by long, fine, spreading hairs. *Lemma* (L) equal to the length of the spikelet, membranous, 5-nerved, some stiff hairs near the base on the back, otherwise hairless, the tip produced into two long, slender, slightly rough awns, equalling the points of the glumes, awned from the back about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way up with a long, twisted, rough awn, 15–20 mm long. *Palea* (P) about $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the lemma, very narrow, slightly 2-pointed, 2-nerved and 2-keeled, membranous. *Anthers* 3, 1.5 mm long, yellowish.

This exotic, temperate, winter annual grass is uncommonly found in the cooler southeastern region, where there is some winter rainfall. The inflorescence is distinctive and decorative.

REFERENCES

Gardner (1952), pp. 145–46; Burbidge and Gray (1970), pp. 50–52; Willis (1970), pp. 149–50; Beadle *et al.* (1972), p. 655; Black (1978), p. 179.

KEY TO SPECIES

Only one species occurs in the region.