



X3.7

NEURACHNE MUNROI

An erect, tufted perennial, 16–40 cm high, shortly rhizomatous. *Culms* few to several, arising from a short rhizome, often much branched at the lower nodes, slightly rough to the touch downwards, hairless. *Nodes* 2–3, densely clothed in short, woolly hairs, the internodes distinctly striate. *Leaves* basal and on the culms, pale grey-green to straw-coloured, the lowermost ones reduced to many overlapping, scale-like appendages, which are woolly around the base. *Leaf sheaths* striate, more or less hairless, rounded, not loose, shorter than the internodes, persistent. *Ligule* a rim or irregular hairs up to 0.7 mm long, with longer, tubercle-based hairs laterally. *Leaf blades* flat or with inrolled margins, 2–12 cm long and up to 3.5 mm wide, slightly rough, striate, straight, recurved and/or twisted, often breaking off at the ligule, finely pointed.

Inflorescence a simple, terminal raceme, 2.5–5.5 cm long and 0.8–1.4 cm wide, the axis pubescent. *Spikelets* (S) all similar, 5.4–6.7 mm long, dorsally compressed, spirally arranged around the axis, falling entire at maturity, slightly pedicellate with the pedicels densely covered with long, stiff hairs. *Florets* 2, the lower floret male or sterile, the upper bisexual and slightly shorter than the lower. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) dissimilar; the lower (G_1) 5–6 mm long, rigid, without hairs, slightly truncate to rounded at the very tip, 7-nerved, the 3 lateral nerves more or less together and curving inward in the upper part, creating 2 furrows on either side of the mid-nerve and a tendency to reflex slightly on the back in the upper part, keeled along the margins in the upper part, each with membranous infolded flaps; the upper (G_2) slightly longer and broader than G_1 , papery-membranous, 7-nerved or sometimes more, the membranous margins infolded in the upper $\frac{2}{3}$, sharply pointed, slightly concave on the back in the upper part, due to the lateral nerve curving inwards to join the next nerve, the lateral nerves densely hairy on the back from the base and arching across near the middle and creating two “eyebrows”. *Lemmas* (L_1 , L_2) membranous; L_1 slightly shorter than G_2 , 5–7-nerved, rounded on the back; L_2 slightly shorter than L_1 , delicate, nerveless or 1-nerved, the base expanded into two membranous lobes. *Paleas* (P_1 , P_2) very dissimilar, delicately membranous; P_1 $\frac{1}{4}$ the length of L_1 , ragged along the top, faintly 2-nerved and with incurved flaps near the base; P_2 longer than L_2 , narrow, nerveless, with clasping auricles at the base. *Anthers* 3, about 2 mm long, pale yellow.

The grass is found usually on stony ground or on deeper, red, sandy soils of the mulga (*Acacia aneura*) woodlands and shrublands, but also with *Triodia* spp. It is definitely a grass of the western semiarid zones.

REFERENCES

Blake (1972a),¹ pp. 14–16; Black (1978),² pp. 235–37; Jessop (1981),³ pp. 484–85.

KEY TO SPECIES

Lower glume blunt. Leaves mostly shorter (up to 12 cm long) and markedly variable in length, sparsely hairy.

N. munroi^{1,2,3}

Lower glume distinctly pointed. Leaves mostly longer (up to 20 cm long), less variable in length, often obviously hairy.

*N. queenslandica*¹