



G₁



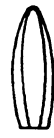
G₂



L₁

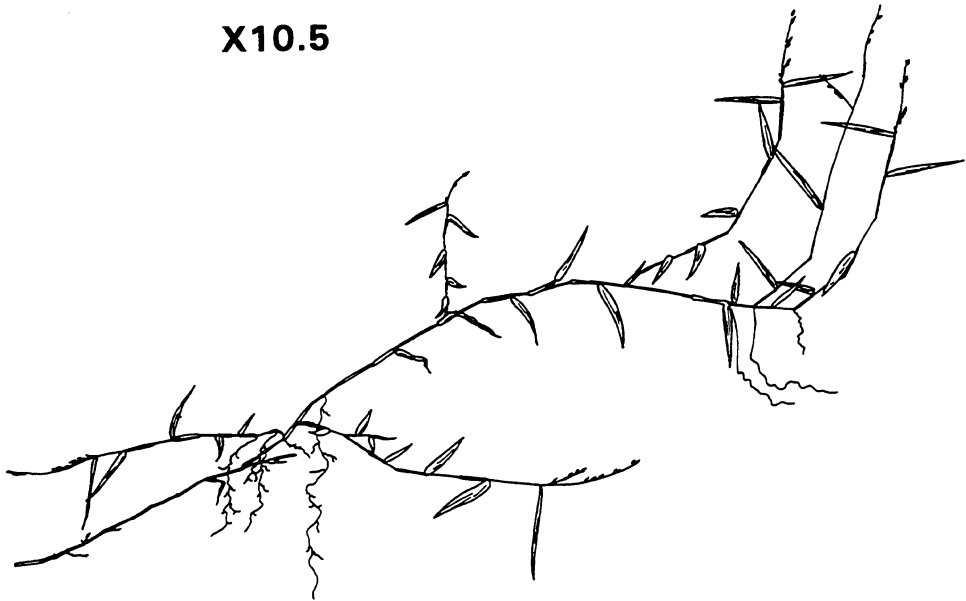


L₂



P₂

X10.5



OTTOCHLOA GRACILLIMA

A very slender, sprawling perennial. *Culms* mostly less than 15 cm high, often rooting at the nodes along the prostrate part, smooth and mostly hairless, the internodes usually less than 2.5 cm long. *Nodes* numerous, not enclosed by the sheaths. *Leaves* on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* loose, much shorter than the internodes, a line of tubercle-based hairs down one of the overlapping lateral margins, particularly towards the ligule. *Ligule* a short membranous rim with ragged edges, with some long hairs on each lateral margin. *Leaf blades* flat, usually less than 3.5 cm long, 4–5 mm broad, contracted at the base into a ligule, rounded on the sides and tapering from above the base to a point.

Inflorescence an open panicle, usually 3–5 cm long with 2–4 branches of varying length along the elongated axis. *Spikelets* (S) several and alike on slender pedicels along the raceme, 1.75–2 mm long, dorsally flattened, slightly convex, disarticulating below the glumes and falling entire at maturity. *Florets* 2, the lower floret neuter and reduced to a lemma, the upper bisexual. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) unequal, both very much shorter than the spikelet, membranous; the lower glume (G_1) about $\frac{1}{2}$ the length of the spikelet, 3-nerved; the upper (G_2) about $\frac{2}{3}$ the length of the spikelet, 5-nerved. *Lemma* (L_1) of the lower sterile floret membranous, the length of the spikelet, 7-nerved. *Palea* absent. *Lemma* (L_2) of the upper fertile floret faintly 3-nerved, the length of L_1 , firmly membranous, granular in appearance on the back, the margins more or less fringed with short hairs and partly enclosing the palea. *Palea* (P_2) firmly membranous, 2-keeled, about $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of the spikelet. *Anthers* 3, 1 mm long.

The grass is locally abundant in coastal areas of southern Queensland and northern New South Wales, commonly in shady places and mostly in open eucalyptus forest, where it often forms dense green mats, rather than rainforest. It is of little economic significance.

REFERENCES

Hubbard (1934b),¹ p. 445; Lazarides (1961);² Beadle *et al.* (1972),³ p. 670; Vickery (1975),⁴ pp. 137–38.

KEY TO SPECIES

Spikelets 3–3.5 mm long; panicles 7–15 cm long with 4–12 primary branches; leaf blades usually less than 4.5 cm long; taller, stouter plant.

O. nodosa^{1,2}

Spikelets about 2 mm long; panicles usually 3–5 cm long with 2–4 primary branches; leaf blades less than 3.5 cm long; slender, shorter plant.

O. gracillima^{1,2,3,4}