



POLYPOGON MONSPELIENSIS

Annual Beardgrass

An erect, tufted annual, up to 60 cm tall. *Culms* erect, comparatively stout, smooth and hairless, branching only at the base. *Nodes* hairless. *Leaves* basal and on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* rounded, smooth, hairless, striate, often longer than the internodes. *Ligule* membranous, rounded, 5–6 mm long. *Leaf blades* up to 20 cm long and 6 mm wide, but often shorter and narrower, slightly rough on both surfaces, more or less parallel-sided in the lower part, tapering to a fine point.

Inflorescence a densely contracted panicle, 2–15 cm long, 1–2 cm wide, often slightly lobed. *Spikelets* (S) about 2 mm long, excluding the awns, densely clustered on the panicle branches, all similar, falling entire at maturity. *Florets* 1, bisexual. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) equal, the length of the spikelet, 1-nerved, slightly 2-lobed at the apex with a long terminal awn about 5 mm long, rough on the back in the lower part, the margins fringed with fine, short hairs. *Lemma* (L) smooth and shiny, membranous, about 1 mm long, with the single nerve extending into a fine awn about 2 mm long, truncate, with 2 slight points on either side of the awn. *Palea* (P) slightly shorter than the lemma, faintly 2-nerved, thinly membranous, slightly 2-pointed. *Anthers* 3, 0.5 mm long.

A grass not found frequently, but widely distributed. Often associated with waste places, but it is reputedly palatable to stock.

REFERENCES

Gardner (1952), p. 142; Burbidge and Gray (1970), p. 50; Willis (1970), p. 148; Beadle *et al.* (1972), p. 655; Black (1978), pp. 180–81; Jessop (1981), p. 436.

KEY TO SPECIES

This is the only species of this essentially temperate genus found in Queensland.