



PSEUDORAPHIS SPINESCENS

Spiny Mudgrass

A creeping grass, extending up to 1.25 m in length; when growing in water, often forming large floating masses, sometimes tufted. *Culms* mostly prostrate, branched at the lower rooted nodes and above, the flowering culms becoming erect towards maturity. *Nodes* hairless, numerous, the internodes exceeding the sheaths at maturity. *Leaves* mostly on the culms, light green. *Leaf sheaths* loose, flattened, hairless, striate, smooth. *Ligule* a membranous collar about 1 mm long, longer and slightly pointed on the lateral margins. *Leaf blades* rough down the margins, otherwise hairless, mostly standing out at right angles from the vertical culms, up to 12 cm long, 3–4 mm wide, tapering to a fine point from near the tip.

Inflorescence a simple panicle of racemes, up to 10 cm long, the racemes up to 4–5 cm long, spreading, borne singly or slightly clustered along the axis, produced beyond the last spikelet into an awn-like point. *Spikelets* (S) narrow, about 6 mm long, few on each branch and spaced along it, borne singly and all similar, shortly pedicelled and closely adpressed to the slightly zig-zag raceme axis, at maturity falling entire from the pedicels. *Florets* 2, the lower male, the upper usually female or sometimes bisexual. *Glumes* (G₁, G₂) very dissimilar, membranous; the lower glume (G₁) about 1 mm long, round on the tip, nerveless, thinly membranous; the upper (G₂) the length of spikelet, many-nerved, tapering to a fine point, on the back tubercle-based, spiny hairs close to the margins and on the mid-rib. *Lemma* (L₁) of the lower male floret membranous, slightly shorter (about 5 mm), less finely pointed than G₂ and with fewer nerves, without spines. *Palea* (P₁) about ¾ the length of L₁, 2-nerved, enclosing the anthers, thinly membranous. *Anthers* 3, 1.25 mm long. *Lemma* (L₂) of the upper female floret ½ the length of L₁, smooth, shining, and pale-coloured, thin, nerveless, bluntly pointed at the tip. *Palea* (P₂) slightly shorter, very thin, the 2 marginal flaps partly enclosing the grain. *Anthers* remnant or aborted.

The grass is widespread, but restricted to wet or damp sites, and is often found as an ephemeral in flooded gilgais on dark cracking-clay soils. It appears to have little agronomic value.

REFERENCES

Bailey (1902),¹ p. 1834 (as *Chamaeraphis* spp.); Gardner (1952),² p. 240; Willis (1970),³ p. 202; Beadle *et al.* (1972),⁴ p. 668; Vickery (1975),⁵ pp. 211–14; Black (1978),⁶ p. 230; Jessop (1981),⁷ p. 482.

KEY TO SPECIES

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| Panicle spreading, with distant spikelets on slender branches.
Upper lemma blunt (spiny mud grass) | <i>P. spinescens</i> ^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7}
(<i>abortiva</i>) |
| Panicle spike-like but loose, branches reduced to 1 or 2 almost sessile spikelets (slender mud grass) | <i>P. paradoxa</i> ^{1,3,4,5} |