



STENOTAPHRUM SECUNDATUM

Buffalo Grass

A stout, stoloniferous perennial, smooth and hairless, the stolons rooting freely at the nodes, from which clusters of tillers also arise. *Culms* smooth, branching freely at the nodes, prostrate in vegetative plants, but becoming erect when flowering, then up to 50 cm tall. *Nodes* enclosed by the enlarged sheath bases, rooting at those of the trailing stems. *Leaves* mostly basal or clustered at the rooted nodes. *Leaf sheaths* loose, particularly at the base, often as long as the internodes, somewhat flattened and keeled, hairless. *Ligule* reduced to a hairy rim. *Leaf blades* strongly folded or flat, terminating in blunt, boat-shaped tips, 4–10 mm broad, up to 20 cm long.

Inflorescence a single, thick, fleshy or corky, spike-like panicle, 5–10 cm long, terminal or on axillary branches, barely exerted from the sheath of the flag leaf, the spikelets singly or up to 4 together, sessile on short, wavy branches, which are more or less embedded in concavities on one side of the enlarged, flattened axis. *Spikelets* (S) 4.5–5 mm long, at maturity falling entire with the axis joints. *Florets* 2, the lower male or sometimes sterile, the upper bisexual. *Glumes* (G_1 , G_2) very unequal; the lower glume (G_1) short, less than $\frac{1}{4}$ the length of the upper, nerveless, blunt, rounded; the upper (G_2) the length of the spikelet, 5–9-nerved. *Lemma* (L_1) of the lower male or sterile floret similar to G_2 , membranous, 7–9-nerved. *Palea* (P_1), when present, membranous, faintly 2-nerved, about $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of L_1 . *Anthers*, when present, 3, 2.5–3 mm long. *Lemma* (L_2) of the upper fertile floret membranous, faintly 3–5-nerved, slightly shorter than L_1 . *Palea* (P_2) tightly clasped by the lemma, about as long as L_2 , thinly membranous, faintly 2-nerved. *Anthers* 3, 2.5–3 mm long.

This is a forage grass introduced from the southern United States, sometimes also cultivated as a lawn grass and locally naturalized in some higher rainfall areas. It was sown fairly widely prior to the use of *Paspalum dilatatum*.

REFERENCES

Gardner (1952),¹ p. 242; Willis (1970),² pp. 205–6; Beadle *et al.* (1972),³ pp. 664–65; Sauer (1972);⁴ Vickery (1975),⁵ pp. 264–66; Black (1978),⁶ pp. 134–35.

KEY TO SPECIES

Inflorescence markedly flattened; spikelets 4–5 mm long; upper glume (facing axis) about length of spikelet (buffalo grass)	<i>S. secundatum</i> ^{1,2,3,4,5,6}
Inflorescence cylindrical; spikelets about 3 mm long; upper glume reduced to a nerveless scale. Northern coastal.	<i>S. micranthum</i> ⁴