



# TRISETUM SPICATUM

## Bristle Grass

A slender, tufted or slightly stoloniferous perennial, up to 50 cm tall. *Culms* erect, or at first lying close to the ground and sometimes rooting from the lowest nodes, slender, smooth and hairless. *Nodes* hairless, generally unbranched. *Leaves* mostly basal, but also on the culms. *Leaf sheaths* very shortly and softly hairy, striate, shorter than the internodes, becoming loose on the lower part of the culm. *Ligule* membranous, but hairy along the rim, about 2 mm long. *Leaf blades* smooth, hairless to slightly but softly hairy, up to 30 cm long and 1-2 mm wide, tapering gradually in the upper part to a fine point.

*Inflorescence* a spike-like panicle, 5-15 cm long, densely contracted, though often interrupted somewhat near the base, straw-coloured to purple, at maturity well exerted from the upper leaf sheath, slightly nodding. *Spikelets* (S) about 8 mm long (excluding the awns) on slender pedicels 1-3 mm long, usually up to 4 per panicle branch, all similar, disarticulating above the persistent glumes at maturity. *Florets* 2-3, both bisexual and similar. *Glumes* (G<sub>1</sub>, G<sub>2</sub>) unequal, membranous, smooth or slightly rough on the back, slightly keeled down the middle of the back, the tip slightly extended to a sharp point, shorter than the spikelet; the lower glume (G<sub>1</sub>) about 4 mm, shorter and narrower than the upper, 1-nerved; the upper (G<sub>2</sub>) about 6 mm, 3-nerved. *Lemmas* (L) membranous, smooth, about 5 mm long, 3-nerved, the two lateral nerves close to the central one, which is continued into a kneed awn of 5-6 mm from about  $\frac{2}{3}$  the way up the back, the remaining part of the tip split into 2 fine teeth. *Paleas* (P) only slightly shorter than the lemmas, thinly membranous, 2-keeled and 2-nerved, the keels slightly rough in the upper half, the margins almost enclosing the flower, the tip slightly 2-toothed. *Anthems* 3, about 2.5 mm.

The grass is rare in Queensland, having been found above 1000 m on the McPherson Range and Mt Cordeau. It is a widespread alpine/arctic species in other parts of the world.

### REFERENCES

Blake (1948*b*), p. 156; Burbidge and Gray (1970), p. 34; Willis (1970), pp. 129-30; Black (1978), p. 168.

### KEY TO SPECIES

Only one species occurs in southern Queensland.