



## VETIVERIA FILIPES

A strongly tufted perennial, up to 1 m tall. *Culms* rough downwardly to the touch immediately below the inflorescence, otherwise smooth, hairless, becoming fairly slender and rounded towards the inflorescence, but the leafy bases densely overlapping and strongly flattened, arising from a shortly rhizomatous base, strongly rooted and branched at the lower nodes, sparingly branched at the upper nodes. *Nodes* 3–6, prominent, without hairs. *Leaves* mainly basal. *Leaf sheaths* densely overlapping, flattened and persistent at the base, smooth and hairless. *Ligule* a narrow rim of short hairs. *Leaf blades* 15–45 cm long, 3–6 mm wide, keeled, slightly rough on the upper surface, smooth below.

*Inflorescence* a panicle of racemes, 15–30 cm long, at first with the branches more or less erect (3–7 cm wide), but later spreading (up to 12 cm wide), the simple, primary branches slender, mostly in whorls or clusters along the rough axis and tending to be more on one side, the whole slightly nodding; the racemes purple, 3.5–9 cm long, usually longer than their slender branches, 3–7 jointed (i.e. with 3–7 spikelet pairs), breaking up at maturity into the separate joints. *Spikelets* ( $S_1$ ,  $S_2$ ) in pairs (except the terminal group, which is a triplet), dissimilar, one sessile, the other pedicellate. *Florets* 2 in both spikelets, the lower floret sterile in both, bisexual in the upper floret of the sessile spikelet, nearly always sterile in the pedicellate spikelet. *Sessile spikelet* ( $S_1$ ) fertile, 8–10 mm long (excluding the callus), grey-coloured and awned, with a noticeably callused base bearded with brown hairs up to 1.5 mm long. *Glumes* ( $G_1$ ,  $G_2$ ) more or less similar, the length of the spikelet, slightly thickened; the lower glume ( $G_1$ ) 4-nerved, a row of tubercle-based spines down the back of the 2 lateral nerves; the upper ( $G_2$ ) 3-nerved, shortly but densely spined down the nerves on the upper part of the back, the tip produced into a short awn. *Lemma* ( $L_1$ ) of the lower sterile floret  $\frac{3}{4}$  the length of the glumes, thinly membranous and transparent, faintly 2-nerved, fringed on the margin near the tip with loose hairs. *Palea* absent. *Lemma* ( $L_2$ ) of the upper fertile floret rather narrow and membranous, faintly 3-nerved, extended from the tip into a twisted awn, 12–36 mm long, brown-coloured and rough. *Palea* ( $P_2$ ) thinly membranous, about 3 mm long. *Anthers* 3, about 2.5 mm long. *Pedicellate spikelet* ( $S_2$ ) usually sterile, 3–8 mm long, the pedicel flattened and almost the length of  $S_1$ , purple, not awned, often reduced to the glumes. *Glumes* ( $G_1$ ,  $G_2$ ) similar in length, the length of the spikelet, not thickened like those of  $S_1$ ; the lower glume ( $G_1$ ) 5-nerved, slightly bristly on the margin near the tip; the upper ( $G_2$ ) 3- or 1-nerved. *Lemma* ( $L_1$ ) of the lower sterile floret (when  $S_2$  is male) like  $L_1$  of  $S_1$ , but shorter. *Palea* absent. *Lemma* ( $L_2$ ) of the upper male floret thinly membranous, faintly 2-nerved, shorter than  $L_1$ , to very short or absent. *Palea* ( $P_2$ ) about  $\frac{1}{2}$  the length of  $L_2$ , thinly membranous, nerveless. *Anthers*, when present, 3, 2–2.5 mm long.

The grass is usually found in eastern Queensland growing on stream-banks, flood flats and rocky creek-beds of the open forest, subcoastal country. It is readily eaten by stock and often is seen as a cushion-like stump. The inflorescence is very like that of *Chrysopogon*, from which it is easily distinguished by the greater number of joints per raceme and more or less straight awns.

### REFERENCES

Bailey (1902), p. 1868 (as *Chrysopogon elongatus* var. *filipes*); Blake (1944b), pp. 18–24.

### KEY TO SPECIES

Only one species occurs in southern Queensland.