



**X3.0**

## XEROCHLOA LANIFLORA

A tufted or stoloniferous annual (sometimes perennial) up to 40 cm tall. *Culms* more or less erect from the tufts, or prostrate at the base and then rooting at the nodes, or fully prostrate forming stolons with both shoots and roots from the nodes, branching at the nodes of the erect culms, and from the base. *Nodes* 2-3, hairless. *Leaves* green, often rather sparse, on the culms and basal in tufted forms, smooth, hairless. *Leaf sheaths* loose, striate, becoming papery, persistent, shorter than the internodes. *Ligule* a rim of short, silky hairs. *Leaf blades* narrow, the margins in-rolled, 2-3 mm wide and up to 10 cm long, tapering gradually to a fine point, dis-articulating at the ligule when mature.

*Inflorescence* a narrow spatheate panicle up to 15 cm long with a slender axis, each branch subtended by an inflated, elliptical, papery spathe, slightly striate, straw-coloured or purplish, and bearing a small, strap-like rudimentary blade, more or less enclosing 1-4 (usually 2) contracted, shortly pedicellate spikes, each of which is enclosed almost entirely by a papery, bladeless bract. *Spikelets* (S) 2 within each bract, more or less alike, 6-10 mm long, densely covered with long, beautifully crimped, woolly hairs in the lower part, on a 4-10 mm long, woolly rhachis, which is toughened, wrinkled and triangular, and concavo-convex, at maturity falling entirely as a pair, usually free of the enclosing bract. *Florets* 2, the lower one usually male, the upper bisexual. *Glumes* (G<sub>1</sub>, G<sub>2</sub>) dissimilar, narrow-rectangular; the lower glume (G<sub>1</sub>) thinly membranous, 1-nerved, about ½ the length of the spikelet, densely woolly on the back; the upper (G<sub>2</sub>) slightly shorter than S<sub>1</sub>, 2-nerved, firm down the middle, and membranous on the margin, woolly on the lower ⅔ of the back. *Lemmas* (L<sub>1</sub>, L<sub>2</sub>) very dissimilar, slightly shorter than the spikelet; L<sub>1</sub> narrow, rectangular, rounded at the tip, the several nerves close in the centre, slightly keeled with membranous margins, without woolly hairs; L<sub>2</sub> smooth, shining, toughened, broad at the base and rounded on the back, the upper part extended into a narrow beak, faintly 3-nerved, slightly keeled on the margins and clasping the palea. *Paleas* (P<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>) very dissimilar, the length of the spikelet; P<sub>1</sub> 2-nerved and strongly 2-keeled, the margins extending into flaps embracing the upper floret, the lower half thickened and densely woolly on the keels, the upper part attenuated. P<sub>2</sub> like L<sub>2</sub> in texture and rigidity, 2-nerved and 2-keeled, flat between the keels, broad at the base and attenuated upwards into a tube. *Anthers* 3, long.

The grass is found in the north and west of the region. Though widespread, it is not common, but may be locally abundant. It is found on a variety of soils from stony, loamy or clay to sandy soils, often associated with seasonally flooded areas or dry watercourses.

### REFERENCES

Benthams (1878), pp. 501-2; Gardner (1952), pp. 290-97.

### KEY TO SPECIES

This is the only species of this endemic northern Australian genus to occur in the region.