

170. AXONOPUS P. Beauvois, Ess. Agrostogr. 12. 1812.

地毯草属 di tan cao shu

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Perennials, rarely annuals. Culms tufted or stoloniferous. Leaf blades flat or involute, often obtuse; ligule short, membranous-ciliate. Inflorescence composed of 2 to many slender racemes, mostly subdigitate but sometimes along a short central axis; spikelets borne singly, subsessile, alternating in 2 rows along the narrow triquetrous rachis, lower lemma adaxial. Spikelets lanceolate to oblong, flatly biconvex, florets 2 (but apparently 1); lower glume absent; upper glume membranous, as long as spikelet, obscurely 4- or 5-veined; lower floret neuter, reduced to an empty lemma similar to upper glume, its palea absent; upper floret crustaceous, lemma margins inrolled, apex obtuse. $x = 9, 10$.

About 110 species: tropical and subtropical America, one species in Africa; two species (both introduced) in China.

Many species of *Axonopus* are good forage or lawn grasses. The two species found in China have been widely introduced in the humid tropics of the world.

1a. Nodes of culm bearded; spikelets 2–2.7 mm; upper floret shorter than spikelet; leaf blades 6–12 mm wide 1. *A. compressus*

1b. Nodes of culm glabrous; spikelets 1.6–2 mm; upper floret equaling spikelet; leaf blades 3–6 mm wide 2. *A. fissifolius*

1. ***Axonopus compressus*** (Swartz) P. Beauvois, Ess. Agrostogr. 12. 1812.

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Milium compressum Swartz, Prodr. 24. 1788; *Paspalum compressum* (Swartz) Raspail (1825), not Rafinesque (1817); *P. guadaloupense* Steudel.

Perennial with vigorous creeping stolons, forming sward. Culms 15–60 cm tall, nodes bearded. Leaf sheaths loose, strongly compressed, keeled, basal sheaths imbricate; leaf blades broadly linear to lanceolate, flat or folded, 5–20 × 0.6–1.2 cm, glabrous or adaxial surface pilose, apex obtuse; ligule 0.3–0.5 mm. Racemes 2–5, digitate or subdigitate, 4–10 cm, only slightly diverging; rachis glabrous. Spikelets oblong-lanceolate, 2–2.7 mm, pilose or glabrous, apex acute; upper glume and lower lemma 2–4-veined, midvein absent, laterals marginal; upper lemma pale, oblong-elliptic, shorter than spikelet, obtuse with an apical tuft of hairs; stigmas pale. Fl. and fr. summer–autumn. $2n = 40, 50, 60, 80$.

Roadsides, weedy places on moist ground, naturalized. Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Hainan, Taiwan, Yunnan [native to tropical America; widely introduced elsewhere].

This is a good lawn and fodder grass.

2. ***Axonopus fissifolius*** (Raddi) Kuhlmann, Comm. Linh. Telegr., Bot. 67(Bot. 11): 87. 1922.

类地毯草 lei di tan cao

Paspalum fissifolium Raddi, Agrostogr. Bras. 26. 1823; *Axonopus affinis* Chase; *A. compressus* var. *affinis* (Chase) M. R. Henderson; *Paspalum xizangense* B. S. Sun & H. Sun.

Perennial with creeping stolons. Culms compressed, 15–50 cm tall, nodes glabrous. Leaf sheaths compressed, strongly keeled; leaf blades broadly linear, folded, 5–20 × 0.3–0.6 cm, apex obtuse; ligule ca. 0.2 mm. Racemes 2–4, 2-paired, any others spaced slightly below, 3–8 cm, only slightly diverging; rachis glabrous. Spikelets oblong-elliptic, 1.5–2 mm, pilose near margins and apex or subglabrous, apex subacute; upper glume and lower lemma 2–4-veined, midvein absent; upper lemma pale, ovate, as long as spikelet, obtuse with a short apical tuft of hairs; stigmas purple. Fl. and fr. summer–autumn. $2n = 54, 80$.

Moist muddy or sandy meadows, naturalized. Taiwan, Xizang [native to tropical America].

This species is similar to *Axonopus compressus*, but tends to favor rather cooler and more waterlogged situations. It is naturalized in Taiwan and has also been found in Xizang.

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