

145. MICROCHLOA R. Brown, Prodr. 208. 1810.

小草属 *xiao cao shu*

Sun Bixing (孙必兴 Sun Bi-sin); Sylvia M. Phillips

Perennial, or sometimes annual. Culms tufted, slender. Leaves mostly basal; leaf blades narrow, often convolute; ligule short, ciliate from a membranous base. Inflorescence a single raceme; raceme unilateral, very slender, scarcely wider than culm, falcate when dry; spikelets sessile, biseriate, closely imbricate; rachis crescentic in section. Spikelets small, lightly dorsally compressed, narrowly subterete, floret 1 without prolonged rachilla or sterile florets, disarticulating above glumes; glumes subequal, as long as spikelet and enclosing floret, firmly membranous, 1-veined, margins infolding, apex acute, both or only upper deciduous; lower glume keeled; upper glume rounded; lemma shorter than glumes, ovate, keeled, thinly membranous, 3-veined, ciliate on veins, apex acute or minutely emarginate and mucronulate; palea subequal to lemma, keels ciliate. Caryopsis ellipsoid. $x = 10$.

Six species: throughout the tropics; one species in China.

1. *Microchloa indica* (Linnaeus f.) P. Beauvois, Ess. Agrostogr., Expl. Pl., 13. 1812.

小草 *xiao cao*

Perennial, or sometimes annual. Culms tufted, usually densely, very slender, wiry, up to 60 cm tall. Basal leaf sheaths disintegrating into fibers; leaf blades very narrowly linear, 1–6 cm, ca. 1 mm wide, adaxial surface usually with long scattered hairs, margins scabrous, midrib and submarginal veins thickened, apex obtuse; ligule 0.1–0.3 mm. Raceme (3–)5–20 (–25) cm, falcate when dry; rachis shortly ciliate on margins or glabrous. Spikelets light green, lanceolate, 1.6–4 mm, acute; lower glume slightly asymmetrical; lemma 1.5–3 mm, mucronate. Caryopsis ca. 1 mm. Fl. and fr. Jul–Oct.

Dry open places, on very stony soils, rock crevices; sea level to 2500 m. Guangdong, Hainan, Yunnan [throughout the tropics].

1a. Plants up to 25 cm tall; raceme 0.8–1 mm wide; spikelets 1.6–3 mm 1a. var. *indica*

1b. Plants 25–60 cm tall; raceme 1–1.5 mm wide; spikelets 2.5–4 mm 1b. var. *kunthii*

1a. *Microchloa indica* var. *indica*

小草(原变种) *xiao cao (yuan bian zhong)*

Nardus indica Linnaeus f., Suppl. Pl., 105. 1782 [“1781”].

Plants sometimes annual, delicate, up to 25 cm tall. Raceme (3–)5–8(–10) cm, 0.8–1 mm wide. Spikelets 1.6–3 mm.

Dry open places inland, sandy places near the sea; sea level to 2500 m. Fujian, Guangdong, Hainan, Yunnan [throughout the tropics; probably introduced in America, rare in Australia].

1b. *Microchloa indica* var. *kunthii* (Desvaux) B. S. Sun & Z. H. Hu, Fl. Reipubl. Popularis Sin. 10(1): 88. 1990.

长穗小草 *chang sui xiao cao*

Microchloa kunthii Desvaux, Mém. Soc. Agric. Angers 1: 179. 1831.

Plants perennial, slightly stouter, base often fibrous, 22–60 cm tall. Raceme (7–)15–20(–25) cm, 1–1.5 mm wide. Spikelets 2.5–4 mm.

Dry open places, especially in rock fissures. Yunnan [throughout the tropics, except Australia].

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