

Notes and New Records of African Plants

by

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GRAMINEAE

A NEW VARIETY OF *FESTUCA COSTATA*

***Festuca costata* Nees var. *longiligulata* J. G. Anders., var. nov.;** planta minore tenuiore; ligula prominenti, 7-12 mm longa, vaginae marginibus contigua, oblonga, apice acuta vel acuminata, plerumque lacerata vel diffisa distinguitur. PLATE 1.

NATAL.—Bergville: Cathedral Peak Forest Research Station, occasional in moist gully in Indumeni Valley, *Killick* 3509; 3510 (PRE, holo.).

This variety has been recorded only from the Indumeni Valley in the Cathedral Peak area of the Natal Drakensberg. There it is found at an altitude of about 5,200 ft in moist gullies below the Cave Sandstone cliffs. According to Dr. D. J. B. Killick (personal communication) local Bantu residents claim that this grass also grows on the summit of the Drakensberg at approximately 10,000 ft.

In most respects it compares well with typical *F. costata*, but is generally a smaller and less robust plant with culms up to 75 cm high, the leaves consistently narrow and with the sheaths only slightly wider than the base of the leaf. It is characterized by the prominent ligules which are 7-12 mm long, oblong, with the apex acute or acuminate and usually lacerated or split. In typical *F. costata* the ligules are ovate, obtuse and 3-4 mm long.

The grass, which is known as uVinde by the local Bantu, is much used in the making of domestic articles such as basins and beer sieves. The leaves have a very high tensile strength when dry.

J. G. ANDERSON

A NEW SPECIES OF *PANICUM*

***Panicum dewinteri* J. G. Anders., sp. nov.** distincta nulla affinitate manifesta obvia.

Gramen perenne, caespitosum, ad 90 cm altum. *Culmi* erecti, tenues, duri et ligni, a nodis multo ramosi, ramo quoque inflorescentiam ferenti, internodis inferioribus et superioribus inaequalibus. *Foliorum vaginae* culmis veteris latae constrictae, firmae, laminae caducis, culmis juvenalioribus laxae, marginibus versus ligulam praesertim pilosae; ligula ciliata; collum hispidulum; laminae planae, rigidae, lanceolatae, 2-8 cm longae, 1-6 mm latae. *Inflorescentia* 4-15 cm longa, 2-10 cm lata, in axillis ramorum omnium pilosa. *Spiculae* 3.5-4 mm longae, lanceolatae, acutae. *Glumae* inaequales; inferiores 2.5 mm longae, anguste ellipticae, 3-nervatae; superiores 3.5-4 mm longae, lanceolatae, 7-nervatae. *Flosculus inferior* sterilis; lemma 3.5-4 mm longum, lanceolatum, 5-7 nervatum; palea 1.0-1.5 mm longa, anguste ovata. *Flosculus superior* bisexualis; lemma 2.5 mm longum, sub-oblongum; palea 2.3-2.5 mm longa, suboblunga. *Antherae* 1 mm longae. *Caryopsis* 1.5 mm longa, elliptica; embryo $\frac{1}{3}$ caryopsidis aequans. PLATE 2.

Type: Transvaal, Soutpansberg District, Lejuma, near Louis Trichardt, *De Winter* 6006 (PRE, holo.).

TRANSVAAL.—Pietersburg: Blouberg, in kloof leading to trigonometrical beacon, *Codd* 8766; *Codd & Dyer* 9080; at edge of Mohlakeng plateau, *Codd & Dyer* 9122. Soutpansberg: south end of Wylliespoort, *Codd* 8366; Lejuma, near Louis Trichardt, *De Winter* 6006.

A tufted perennial up to 90 cm tall. *Culms* erect, terete, many-noded, slender, hard, wiry or woody, branching profusely from the rather thickened nodes, particularly in the upper portion, each branch bearing an inflorescence, glabrous, striate; lower internodes 4–8 cm long, those of the secondary culms 1–3 cm long. *Leaves* variable in size; sheaths finely striate, longer than the internodes, those of the main culm and older branches tightly embracing the culm, glabrous or sparingly pilose, soon becoming dry and brittle, those of the branches looser, glabrous on the back, pilose on the margins particularly towards the ligule; ligule reduced to a shortly ciliate rim; collar hispidulous; blades on the main culm and older branches falling off early, those of the younger branches rigid, expanded, 2–8 cm long, 1–6 mm broad, lanceolate, tapering to an acute apex, pubescent on the upper surface, lower surface glabrous, margins scabrous. *Panicle* 4–15 cm long and 3–10 cm broad, narrowly ovate to ovate in outline, bearing relatively few spikelets, pilose in the axils of all branches; rhachis more or less terete, finely striate, glabrous; primary branches solitary, 3–7 cm long, sub-terete, finely striate; secondary branches 2–3 cm long, slightly angular, straight or flexuous, scabrous; pedicels 1–6 mm long, filiform, abruptly widened at the apex. *Spikelets* 3·5–4 mm long, lanceolate, acute, yellowish or pale green flushed with purple. *Glumes* unequal, membranous; lower 2·5 mm long, narrowly elliptic, acute, 3-nerved, glabrous, pale; upper 3·5–4 mm long, lanceolate, acute, 7-nerved, glabrous, pale green flushed with purple. *Lower floret* sterile; lemma 3·5–4 mm long, lanceolate, acute, membranous, 5–7-nerved, glabrous, pale green flushed with purple; palea 1–1·5 mm long, narrowly ovate, obtuse to acute, minutely scabrid on the keels, translucent. *Upper floret* bisexual; lemma 2·5 mm long, sub-oblong, obtuse to sub-acute, light brown, smooth and glossy, indistinctly 5-nerved; palea 2·3–2·5 mm long, sub-oblong, obtuse to sub-acute, indistinctly 2-nerved. *Anthers* 1 mm long. *Grain* 1·5 mm long, elliptic, brownish-purple; embryo 1/3 the length of the grain.

This grass has been recorded from the Pietersburg and Soutpansberg districts of the northern Transvaal. Here it was found growing on rocky outcrops and in rock crevices at altitudes ranging from 3,500–6,000 ft.

Panicum dewinteri is a distinct species with no close affinities amongst the South African members of the genus.

It is an erect, tufted plant, branching repeatedly and profusely from the many-noded culms, particularly in the upper parts, with each branch bearing an inflorescence. The culms are slender and are hard and woody, or wiry, in appearance. The internodes are variable in length: those of the primary culm 4–8 cm long and those of the branches 1–3 cm long. The main culm and stronger branches are very often naked because the leaf-blades are cast off at maturity and only the hard, dry, dark-coloured sheaths, or relics of the sheaths, firmly embracing the culm, remain. Like the internodes, the leaf-blades and panicles vary considerably in size.