

Eriachne squarrosa R.Br.

This species occurs in Cape York Peninsula as an erect perennial, 38-90 cm high. Leaves and stems with warty based hairs or are hairless. Leaves are cauline (arising along the stem) with blades to 17-30 cm long (Fig. 1). Inflorescences or flowering branches terminate the stem and are exerted some distance from leaf axils. The inflorescences or flowering branches are dense panicles with branches arising along a central stem, panicles are c. 3 cm long, c. 1.5 cm wide (Fig. 2). *Eriachne squarrosa* has spikelets (the basic flowering unit) consisting of two glumes encompassing two bisexual florets (modified flowers) (Fig. 3). The florets are shorter than the glumes, with the lemma of each floret giving rise to a curved awn c. 25 mm long, the palea of each floret is split into two small awns 1-5 mm long

> BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

An annual or perennial species to 90 cm high. The culms or stems hairy with tubercle-based hairs or glabrous. Leaves hairy with tubercle-based hairs or glabrous; leaf blade to 17-30 cm long and up to 3 mm wide. The inflorescences are dense panicles, c. 3 cm long, c. 1.5 cm wide (Fig. 2). Spikelets are defined by two glumes 9-11 mm long, each with a long drawn out apex or beak almost the same length as main body. The glumes encompass two bisexual florets, the florets are much shorter than the glumes (2.5-6 mm long). The lemma of each floret is awned, the lemma awn c. 25 mm long, with the palea of each floret splitting to form two awns much shorter than the lemma awn, 1-5 mm long (Fig. 3). The lemma is densely hairy with hairs exceeding the apex, is abruptly contracted at the awn junction and has no grooves along the lemma apex but has two shallow apical depressions.



Fig. 1. Herbarium sheet of *Eriachne squarrosa*



Fig. 2. Inflorescence of *E. squarrosa*

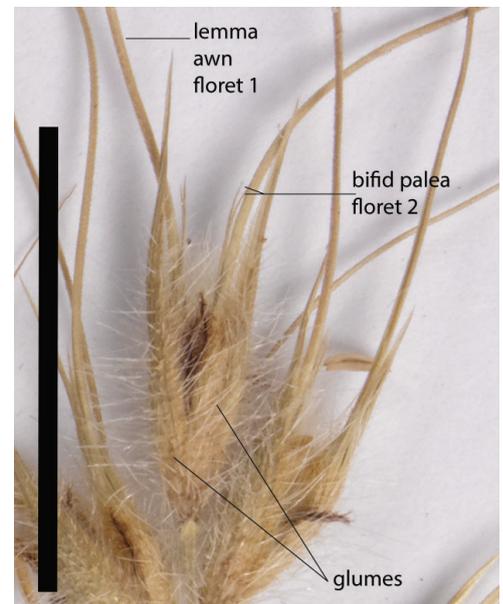


Fig. 3. Mature spikelet of *E. squarrosa*

> DIAGNOSTIC FEATURES

Eriachne squarrosa is one of many species of *Eriachne* characterised by long awned spikelets, the awns curled, curved or bent. Other long awned species of *Eriachne* which occur in the region and may be easily confused with this species are *E. armitii*, *E. burkittii*, *E. glauca*, *E. stipacea*, *E. vesiculosa* and *E. rara*. Some of these species are more easily distinguished than others. Most are treated in this guide, however some of the key differences between the species are shown in Table 1. In other regions of Australia eg. the Northern Territory, additional species may also need to be considered. *Eriachne squarrosa* is distinguished by the combination of the following characters, a perennial habit, the absence of bladder like sacs on the upper leaf surface, a dense hairy inflorescence, the glume elongated into a long thin tip or beak, the florets being distinctly shorter than the glumes and the bifid two awned palea. Users are encouraged to consult Lazarides (2005) or Simon & Alfonso (2011) for more detail on distinguishing between these species.

> NATURAL VALUES

This species is likely to provide seed for granivorous or seed eating animals.

> HABITAT

This species occurs along eastern Queensland from Townsville to Cape York Peninsula. In the Northern Territory it is only known from a coastal locality in the north east; also known from Malesia. Often found in moist, low-lying, sandy flats and depressions under *Melaleuca* spp. and on floodbanks of seasonal streams; also recorded from sandy granite ridges (Lazarides 2005, Simon 2011).

> LAND MANAGEMENT NOTES

Species of this genus are considered generally to be of low forage value (Lazarides 2002).

Table 1: Characters useful in diagnosing 7 long awned *Eriachne* species found in the Quinkan region of CYP.

Species	Habit	Inflorescence	Floret to glume size	Palea apex	Groove on lemma apex
<i>E. armitii</i>	annual	contracted 2.5-7 cm long, 0.8-1.8 cm wide	Distinctly shorter than glume	Palea bifid into two awns	No
<i>E. stipacea</i>	annual/perennial	loose to open 5-13 long, 2.4-7 cm wide	Distinctly shorter than glume	Palea bifid into two awns	Yes or no
<i>E. squarrosa</i>	perennial	contracted, dense c. 3 cm long, c. 1.5 cm wide	Distinctly shorter than glume	Palea bifid into two awns	No
<i>E. burkittii</i> !*	short lived perennial	loose to open or drooping 10.5-19 cm long, 1-6 cm wide	Subequal to exceeding glume	Palea entire or bicuspidate	Yes
<i>E. rara</i>	short lived perennial	Open 3.5-10 cm long, 0.5-5 cm wide	Slightly shorter/ subequal to glume	Palea bifid into two awnlets	No
<i>E. vesiculosa</i> *	annual/perennial	Open 5-10.5 cm long, 1-3.5 cm wide	Much shorter than glume	Palea bifid into two awns	Yes
<i>E. glauca</i> *	perennial	contracted, dense 3-8.5 (-14) cm long, 1.5-3 (-5) cm wide	Subequal to glumes	Notched or bifid to 0.5 mm	Yes

! Purple colouring

* Short bladder like sacs on upper leaf surface (only visible with microscope or hand lens)



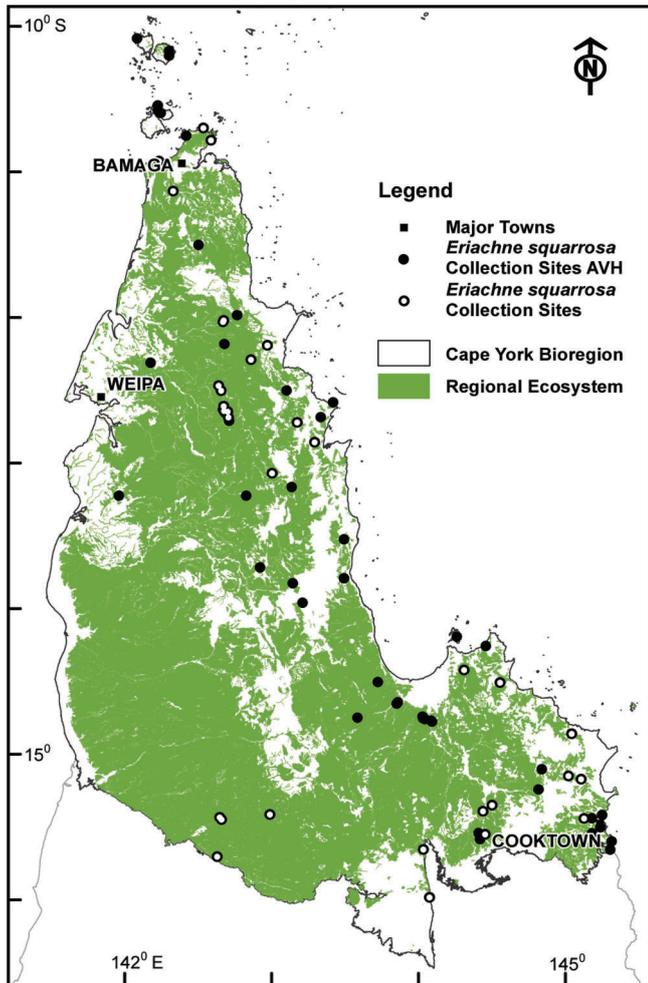


Fig. 4. Map of CYP bioregion showing actual herbarium collections (from BRI and CNS) (solid circle) and site records (open circle) of *Eriachne squarrosa*. The green shading indicates areas where this species might also be found, based on similarity of habitat to locations where the species has been recorded. (Mapping supplied by P. Bannink, DES). Data attribution: Environment and Science, Queensland Government, Biodiversity status of pre-clearing and 2015 remnant regional ecosystems series - version 10.0 licensed under Creative Commons Attribution.

RESOURCES:

AVH (2017) Australia's Virtual Herbarium, Council of Heads of Australasian Herbaria, <<http://avh.chah.org.au>>, accessed 30 May 2017.

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Lazarides, M., Weiller, C.M. & McCusker, A. in Mallett, K. (ed.) (2005) *Eriachne*. *Flora of Australia* 44B: 132-175.

Simon, B.K. & Alfonso, Y. (2011) AusGrass2, <http://ausgrass2.myspecies.info/> accessed on [20 March 2017].

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