

# Collecting in the footsteps of another: an *Eragrostis* sp. (Gramineae) in the Waitakeres

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On a visit to the Kakamatua Inlet with Peter de Lange and his boys this summer, I stepped on a small grass in the roadside gravel, by the bridge. Peter relaxed his concentration on boys and traffic just long enough to make a collection of it (Fig. 1).

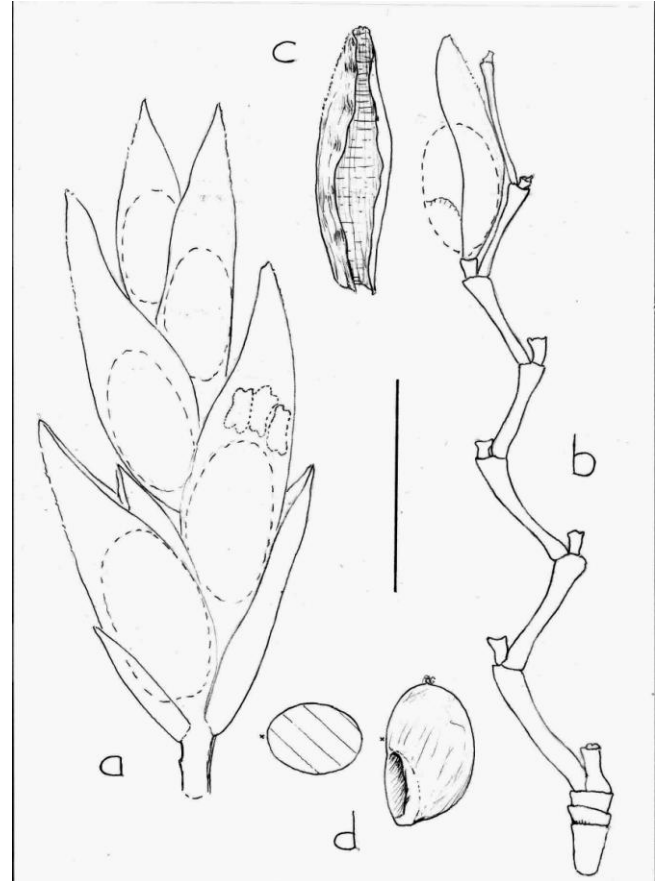
plants. The little purplish-crimson spikelets had mostly eroded away, but some held abundant seed, and once this plant gets east across the bridge into the Kakamatua Inlet car-park it will likely soon begin to appear elsewhere in the Waitakeres.



**Fig. 1.** *ROG 11140* & *P. J. de Lange* (AK 325970) [greyscale scan].  
Scale 1 cm.

As yet I am unable to give a species name: the shape and size of the spikelets, especially the short lower glume, suggest that it might be *Eragrostis pilosa*, but its panicle is glabrous, non-glandular and without whorled branching, and its seed is hardly compressed. A better possibility might be *E. gangetica* (Roxb.) Steud., a Eurasian species weedy in North America but apparently not yet known from Australia.

I revisited the site a month or so later. It was clear that this grass is an annual, a strip of the road-edge some 50 m or more long being covered with dying-off



**Fig. 2.** a) Spikelet, note the unequal glumes, position of grains indicated, and for one floret, the three small anthers. b) Old spikelet, the zigzag rachilla not disarticulating, all paleas except the terminal one shed. c) Palea; the side "flaps" are nearly as deep as the interkeel strip is wide. d) Seed, side view and medial transverse section. All from *ROG 11140* & *P. J. de Lange*. Scale bar 1 mm.

I take the opportunity to congratulate Elizabeth Edgar and Henry Connor (2010) on their producing a second edition of the world's best grass-Flora, with a pretty frontispiece of *Anemanthele lessoniana* and data relevant to the demands of Funk (1993).

## References

- Edgar, E.; Connor, H. E. 2010: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V Gramineae. 2nd edn. Manaaki Whenua Press, Lincoln.  
Funk, V. A. 1993: Uses and misuses of floras [sic]. *Taxon* 42: 761-772.