



Fig. 3. *Mercurialis annua*, Pigeon Mt., male flowers, 4 April 2014.



Fig. 4. *Mercurialis annua*, Pigeon Mt., female flowers, 4 April 2014.

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***Eragrostis multicaulis* (Poaceae) in the Waitakere Ranges**

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The new grass we found on the roadside just west of the Kakamatua Inlet bridge (Gardner 2011) has now been identified (ROG) as *Eragrostis multicaulis* Steud. It resembles the better-known *E. pilosa* but is smaller in all its parts and lacks long hairs in the inflorescence. It is never glandular (that is, it is not a "stink grass") and its grains appear to be somewhat less compressed than those of *E. pilosa*. The native range of *E. multicaulis* is unclear, but it is mainly found in the tropics, including Malesia (Veldkamp 2002). As a naturalised plant it is known from various parts of the world but not, apparently, from Australia (Palmer et al. 2005).

This brings to 12 the number of eragrostids (including *E. pilosa*) that have been found wild in New Zealand (Edgar & Connor 2010). Our specimens

of *E. multicaulis* are deposited with AK (Auckland War Memorial Museum), CHR (Allan Herbarium, Landcare New Zealand) and WELT (Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington).

We picture it here again (Figs. 1 & 2), using more strongly growing material (larger plants can reach c. 20 cm tall). Note the several culms per plant ("*multicaulis*"), short spikelets, and disparity between the lower and upper glumes. The three anthers of each floret are 0.2 mm long. Veldkamp (2002) has noted that these are perhaps always retained in the floret, that is, the species appears to be cleistogamous.

Because of its crimson spikelets this annual grass is most conspicuous when flowering, from mid-

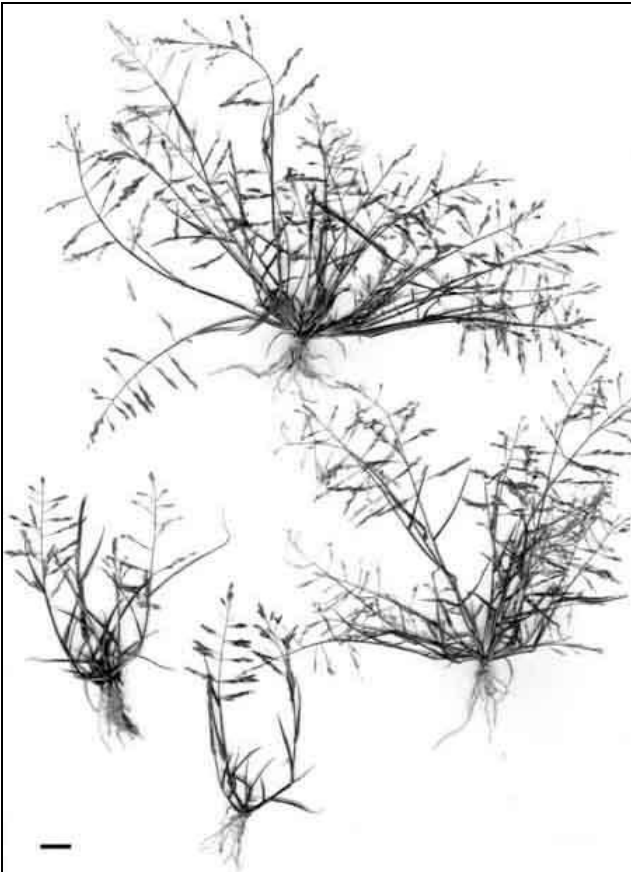


Fig. 1. *E. multicaulis*. Scan of flowering specimens. (scalebar = 1 cm). Figs. 1 & 2 from *ROG 11224* (AK), Kakamatua, collected 25 Dec 2013.

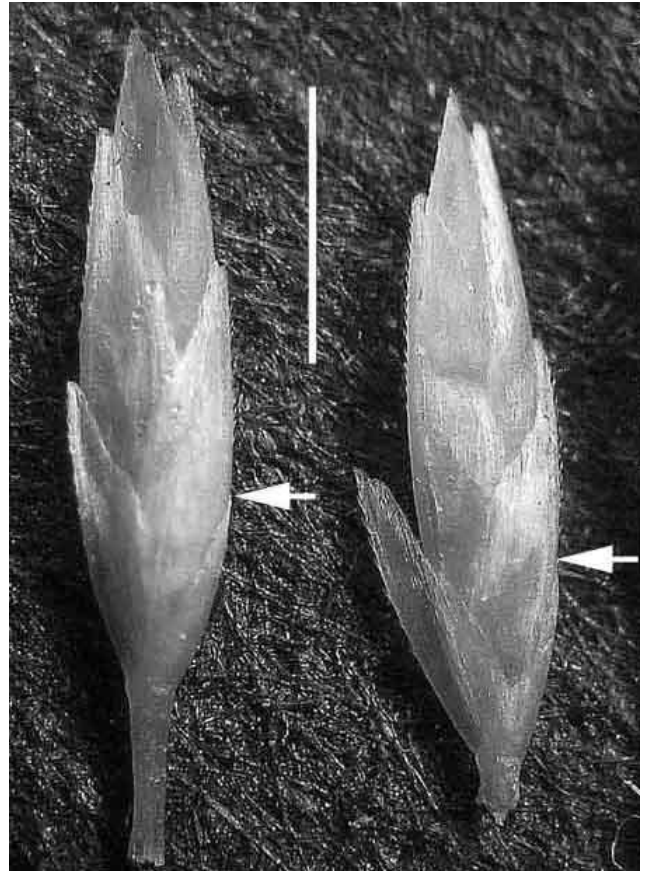


Fig. 2. Close-up of two pre-anthesis spikelets (scalebar 1 mm; arrow at right-hand side of each spikelet indicates top of lower glume).

November to early January. Helped in this way the second author found it this year further west from Kakamatua, in several places along the gravel verges (seaward side only) of the Huia Road as far as the Huia Store (AK 348104), and at one further station, just beyond Little Huia (AK 348106). In the opposite

direction it was seen to have almost reached the Cornwallis turnoff (AK 348107). Further spread must be expected; Titirangi's cafe set is urged to keep an eye out for it and note especially any change in aggressiveness as it enters the urban zone.

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Sexuality of tawapou (*Planchonella costata*, Sapotaceae)

Rhys Gardner

Introduction

One of our rarer native trees, *Planchonella costata* is probably best known and admired for its beautifully coloured fruit. Its small pale flowers, which are not produced in any profusion, would usually be overlooked. Perhaps because of this disparity much remains to be learnt about how these flowers work. A recent account of the sexuality of some New

Caledonian planchonellas (Mendez & Munzinger 2010) has been the stimulus for the very preliminary note here.

The older New Zealand literature contains nothing relevant, and we have to start from the material in two popular modern books. Moore & Irwin (1978: 116) say that the flowers of *P. costata* are "often