

D.O. Bergin

Spinifex

DEPARTMENT OF SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH.

BULLETIN No. 49.

## AN INTRODUCTION

TO THE

# GRASSES OF NEW ZEALAND.

BY

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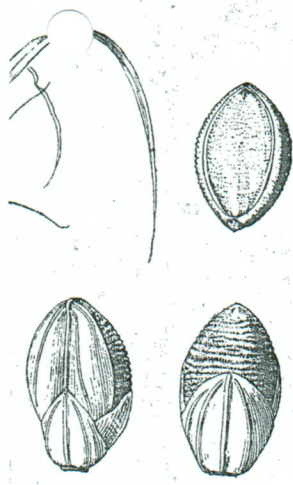
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s (*Setaria glauca*), (H.).  
 l with a somewhat creeping habit  
 wish to purplish, upwardly barbed  
 ures near Auckland.  
 —A loosely tufted annual with rather  
 e, yellowish. Europe.  
 s in both Islands.  
 smaller than pigeon-grass, with green  
 barbed. Europe.  
 ds.  
 —Distinguished from *S. verticillata* by  
 nd more slender. Europe.  
 North Island.

hrus.  
 es, known as "sand burs," "hedgehog-  
 atus is found on the Kermadec Islands

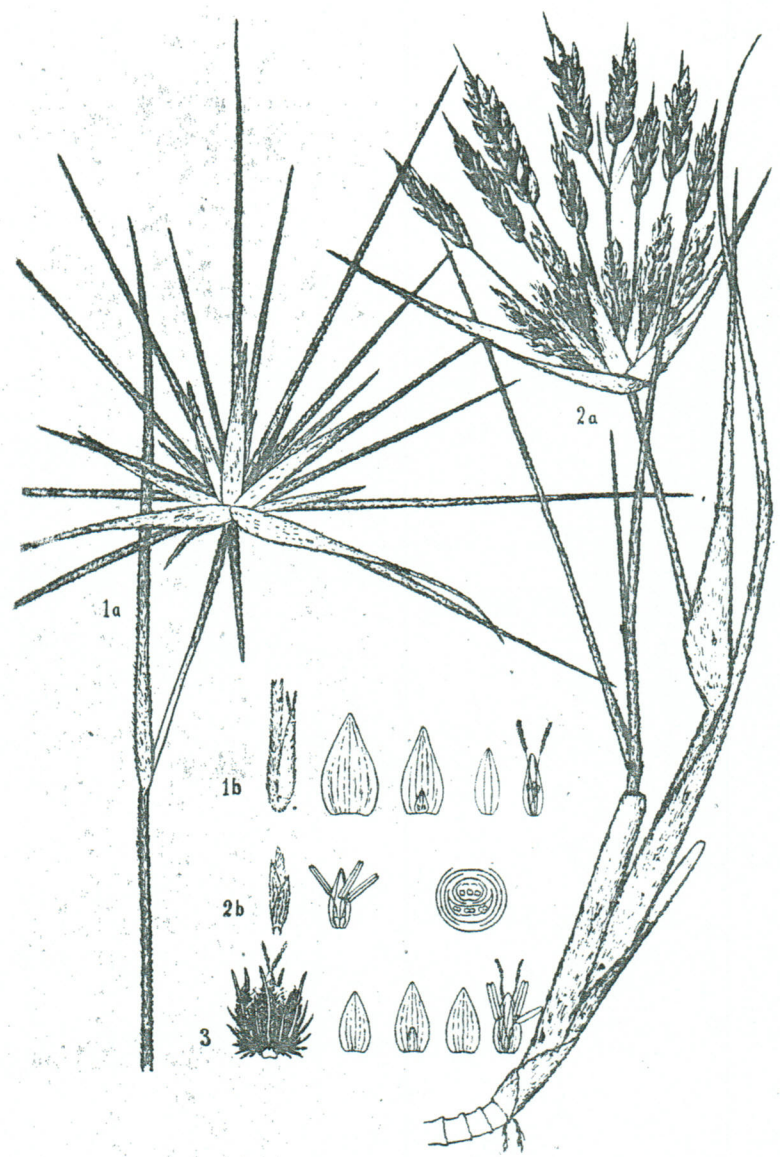


FIG. 101.—*Spinifex hirsutus*: 1a, 1b (female), 2a, 2b (male); *Cenchrus calyculatus*, 3.

*Spinifex.*

A small genus with its centre in Australia.  
*S. hirsutus* (Silvery sand-grass), (fig. 101).—Rolling-grass. A robust  
 grass, with long creeping stout stolons, and long, tough leaves, densely  
 clothed with silvery hairs. The male plants bear the spikelets in umbelled  
 spikes; in the females the small spikelets are in heads, each spikelet situated  
 at the base of a long, pungent spine. Indigenous.





*Themeda Forskalii* (centre); *Imperata Cheesemaniae* (right).

Abundant on sand-dunes in North Island, and the north of South Island. A very valuable sand-binder, covering large patches of drifting sand. (Lockayne(18)).

*Pennisetum.*

This genus of about 50 species is tropical and subtropical, and contains some important forage and ornamental plants. Kikuyu grass, *P. clandestinum*, has been tried in the northern parts of North Island and tends to spread. One or two other ornamental species show a tendency to escape from cultivation.

K. ANDROPOGONEAE.

This tribe is tropical and subtropical. Among its seventy genera are *Sorghum*, with several cultivated species, and *Saccharum*, including the sugarcane. Only one indigenous species belongs to this tribe, and is confined to the Kermadec Islands. *Hemarthria altissima*, an African grass with an inflorescence superficially resembling that of *Pholurus*, has recently been collected at Kaitaia by Mr. Matthews.

*Imperata.*

There are six species, chiefly African and Asiatic. *I. Cheesemaniae*, of the Kermadec Islands, is a tall, rather handsome grass, with a narrow, rather dense panicle, the spikelets concealed by long soft greyish hairs (figs. 90, 102). *I. cylindrica*, with a still denser, shining panicle, is established at Kaitaia, in the North Auckland peninsula.

*Andropogon.*

This contains about a hundred species, some of importance as fodder-grasses.

*A. annulatus* (fig. 102).—A loosely tufted grass with somewhat glaucous leaves, the spikes are 2-3 in number, at the ends of the culms. Australia. Naturalized in a few localities from Auckland northwards.

*Themeda.*

The genus, of some sixteen species, is best represented in the Malayan region. It includes "rooi-grass," a very important member of African savanna country.

*T. Forskalii* (Kangaroo-grass), (fig. 102).—A rather tall, tufted grass, with narrow leaves, the spikelets in distant clusters on a short panicle. Each cluster is subtended by a leafy bract. Tropical Asia.

This is naturalized in a few localities from the Bay of Islands to Marlborough.