

**A NEW SPECIES OF PANICUM (GRAMINEAE)
FROM NORTH VIETNAM**

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SUMMARY

Panicum smithii is newly described from North Vietnam; *P. amoenum* Balansa is lectotypified.

INTRODUCTION

During a study of the Southeast Asiatic material of the genus *Panicum* in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (K), and the Rijksherbarium, Leiden (L), some Balansa material from North Vietnam was investigated. These specimens had originally been included in *P. amoenum* Balansa by its author, but were found to be markedly different, and are here recognised as a new species. Though there is an apparent resemblance between the spikelets of *P. amoenum* and those of the new species, the distinctness of the taxa is easily perceived by characters of the culm, blades, panicle, and size of the spikelets, as is shown in the key below. *Panicum amoenum* sensu Balansa often has been confused with another species, *P. humidorum* Buch.-Ham. ex Hook. f. [*P. humidorum* var. *perakense* Hook. f.; *P. perakense* (Hook. f.) Merr.]. This is evident in Balansa's own material, *Balansa 1632*, one of the types of *P. amoenum*, in which both *P. amoenum* and *P. humidorum* are mounted on the same sheet. Later Dr. Th. Henrard erroneously regarded them both as *P. amoenum* and thus he (Henrard, 1941) included three Bornean specimens from Mt Kinabalu – *Clemens 28275*, *28755A* and *51562* (all at L) – in *P. amoenum* which in fact belong to *P. humidorum*.

The new species is named after Dr. P. M. Smith, Department of Botany, University of Edinburgh, who is an eminent specialist of the grasses.

Panicum smithii* M. M. Rahman, *spec. nov.

P. amoeno Balansa affinis culmo tenuiore, ramis paniculae valde patentioribus, foliis 4–8 cm × 3–5 mm, spiculis paucis, mox caducis minoribus olivaceis differt. Gramen perenne tenui. Culmi 15–35 cm alti 1–2 mm diam. e nodis stolonis longe repentis erecti vel ascendentes, ad nodos infe-

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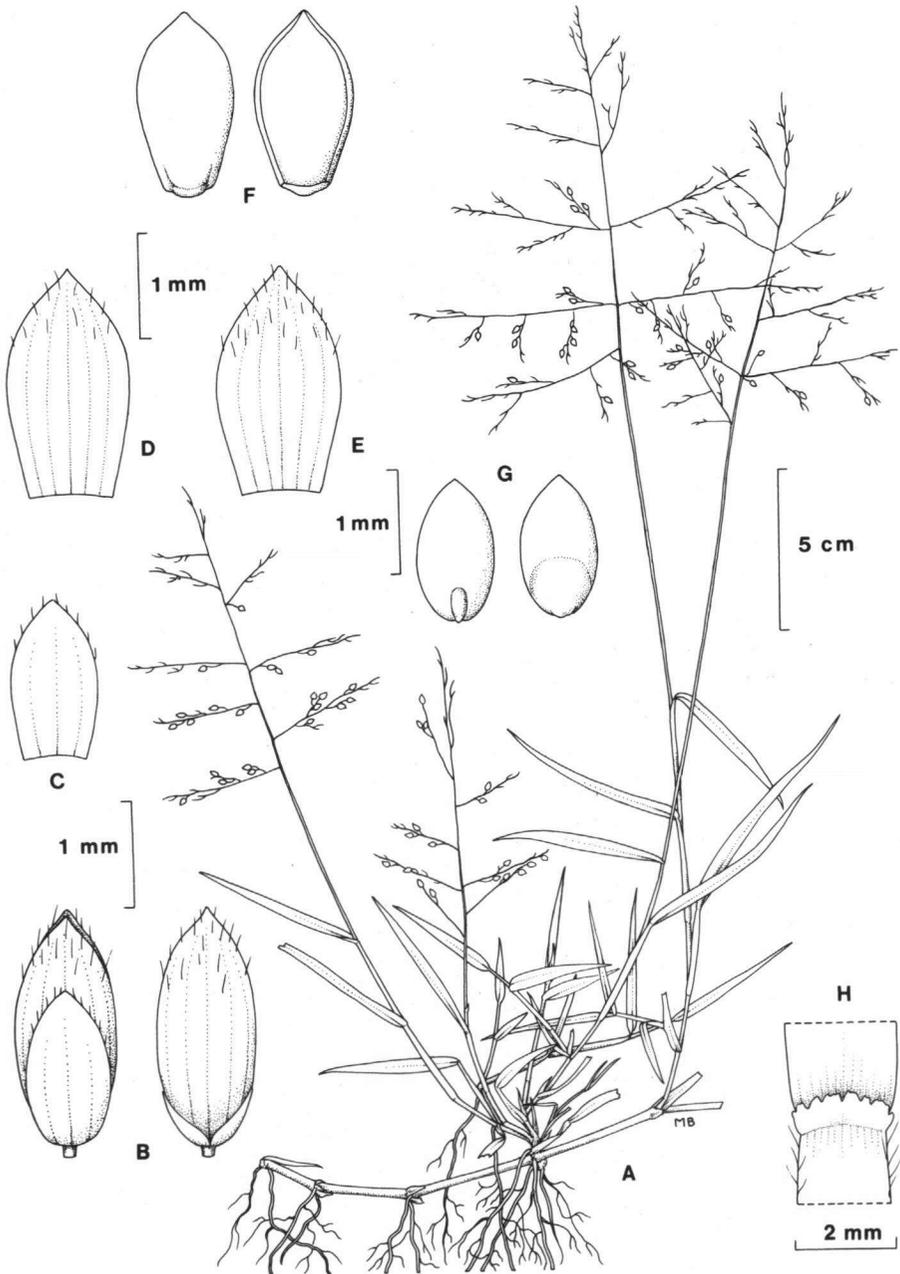


Fig. 1. *Panicum smithii* M.M. Rahman. A. Habit; B. two views of spikelets; C. lower glume; D. upper glume; E. lower lemma; F. two views of upper antherium; G. two views of grain; H. ligule.

riores saepe radicanter, nodi glabri. Vaginae foliorum quam internodii longiores striatae, margine ciliato, cetero glabrae; ligula membranacea breviter lacerata; laminae 4–8 cm longae 3–5 mm latae lineares acuminatae glabrae, base rotundato, marginibus paulo convolutis, costa obscura. Panicula 5–15 cm longa ambitu late ovata erecta, ramis paucis (7–10) patentibus, 3–7 cm longis laxissimis, inferioribus quam superioribus longioribus, rachis ramisque scabridiusculi, ramuli pauci filiformes breves spiculis paucis, pedicelli quam spiculae longiores brevioresve teretes glabri. Spiculae geminatae ovato-oblongae 2–2,3 mm longae acutae, supra mediam pilosae viride-nigrae. Gluma inferior ovata longitudine $\frac{2}{3}$ spiculae partes aequans subacuta vel obtusa 5-nervosa marginibus pilosis non membranaceis; gluma superior spiculum aequans ovata acuta infra apicem pilosa 5-nervosa. Lemma flosculi inferioris glumam superiorem subaequans ovatum acutum infra apicem pilosum sed plus quam gluma superiore 5-nervosum sterile sine palea; lemma flosculi superioris obovoideo-ellipsoideum acutum; antherae c. 0,75 mm longae. — T y p u s : *B. Balansa* 468, North Vietnam, Tonkin, 25 January 1886 (L, holo).

Slender perennial. *Culms* 15–35 cm long, 1–2 mm diam., erect or ascending from nodes of a long creeping stolon, often rooting at the lower nodes, nodes glabrous. *Leaf sheaths* longer than internodes, striate, ciliate on the margins, otherwise glabrous; ligule a shortly lacerate membrane; blades linear, 4–8 cm by 3–5 mm, acuminate, glabrous, base rounded, margins slightly convolute, midrib obscure. *Panicle* erect, broadly ovate in outline, 5–15 cm long, branches 7–10, patent to the axis, 3–7 cm long, very lax, lower branches longer than the upper ones, rachis and branches slightly scabrous, branchlets few, filiform, short, bearing few spikelets, pedicels longer to shorter than spikelets, terete, glabrous. *Spikelets* geminate, ovate-oblong, 2–2.3 mm long, acute, pilose above the middle, greenish black. *Glumes* ovate, 5-nerved; lower c. $\frac{2}{3}$ the length of the spikelet, subacute or obtuse, margins pilose, not membranous; upper as long as the spikelet, acute, pilose below the summit. *Lower lemma* ovate, subequal to the upper glume, acute, more pilose below the summit than the upper glume, 5-nerved, sterile, epaleate; upper lemma obovoid-ellipsoid, acute, anthers c. 0.75 mm long.

D i s t r i b u t i o n. Northern part of North Vietnam, only known from the type.

E c o l o g y. Sandy margins of Langson river, and in grassy patches. Fl. & Fr. January.

Panicum smithii is allied to *P. amoenum* Bal. and *P. bisulcatum* Thunb. These three species are often confused with *P. humidorum* Buch.-Ham. ex Hook.f. The four species can be distinguished as follows:

- 1a. Spikelets 1.4–1.5 mm long, ellipsoid, obtuse **P. humidorum**
- b. Spikelets 1.7–2.3 mm long, ovate-oblong, acute 2
- 2a. Spikelets pilose towards the tips. Lower glume $\frac{2}{3}$ as long as the spikelet 3
- b. Spikelets glabrous or shortly puberulous. Lower glume $\frac{1}{3}$ as long as the spikelet **P. bisulcatum**
- 3a. Culms 3–4 mm in diameter. Leaf blades 10–17 cm by 8–12 mm. Panicle branches ascending at 45–60° angles to the axis. Spikelets persistent, 1.7–2 mm long, olive green **P. amoenum**
- b. Culms 1–2 mm in diameter. Leaf blades 4–8 cm by 3–5 mm. Panicle branches at right angles to the axis. Spikelets soon caducous, 2–2.3 mm long, greenish black **P. smithii**

Neither Balansa nor later authors appointed a lectotype for *Panicum amoenum*. Therefore I propose here as lectotype *Balansa 1632* (L, holo), Vietnam, Mt Bavi, Lankok Valley, 25 October 1887.

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REFERENCE

HENRARD, J.TH. 1941. Notes on the nomenclature of some grasses. *Blumea* 4: 496–538.