



Agrostis griffithiana (Poaceae: Agrostidinae)—typification, a new synonym and an update of the distribution in India

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Abstract

Agrostis griffithiana (Poaceae: Agrostidinae) is typified, fully described and illustrated, and its distribution in northeast India is elucidated. A new synonym is identified, its circumscription and taxonomy is clarified and discussed, especially in relation to the similar species *A. pilosula* and *A. munroana*.

Key words: *Agrostis munroana*, *A. pilosula*, *A. wardii*, *Calamagrostis*, *Deyeuxia griffithii*, NE India, nomenclature, taxonomy

Introduction

Agrostis Linnaeus (1753: 61), *Calamagrostis* Adanson (1763: 31), *Deyeuxia* Clarion ex Beauvois (1812: 43) and *Lachnagrostis* Trinius (1820: 128) are members of the subtribe Agrostidinae in the tribe Poeae in the subfamily Pooideae (Soreng *et al.* 2007, Saarela *et al.* 2010) of the Poaceae. These genera are notoriously problematic because they include several difficult species complexes and numerous hybrids (Howard *et al.* 2009, Paszko & Nobis 2010, Paszko 2011, Paszko & Ma 2011), and the most recent studies of the group highlighted numerous taxonomic and nomenclatural inconsistencies. Many of these difficulties were resolved by Paszko (2012b), Paszko & Soreng (2013), Paszko (2013), and Paszko *et al.* (2013). During a detailed revision new species have been described (Paszko 2012a, Paszko & Pendry 2013, Paszko & Chen 2013) and the taxonomic problems addressed here came to light.

Agrostis griffithiana (Hooker 1896: 263) Bor (1960: 387) was published in the genus *Calamagrostis* by Hooker (1896) based on collections from northeastern and northwestern India, though without an illustration or indication of the precise type. *Agrostis griffithiana* is a member of a group within *Agrostis* characterized by hairy lemmas, and in Australia (Jacobs 2001) and New Zealand (Edgar 1995, Edgar & Connor 2000) this group is recognized as a separate genus, *Lachnagrostis*. In India, this group is represented by *A. griffithiana*, *A. burmanica* Bor (1958: 416), *A. munroana* Aitch. & Hemsl. in Aitchison (1882: 192), *A. pilosula* Trinius (1841: 372), and *A. schmidii* (Hooker 1896: 264) Bor (1960: 389) (Hooker 1896, Bor 1960). Most species from this group are still poorly known with regard to their nomenclature, delimitation, distribution and ecology. Two of these species, *A. munroana* and *A. pilosula* are known to be polymorphic (Hooker 1896, Bor 1954, 1960, Bhattacharya & Jain 1985). Selected specimens of both of these have been used as the basis for this study.

This paper presents typification and a new synonymy for *Agrostis griffithiana*. An amended circumscription, illustrations, and up-to-date distribution information are also presented.