

Alopecurus geniculatus L. (Poaceae)

SPIKELET

Single floret spikelet, disarticulation below the glumes, falling as a unit from the plant

General shape: oval to ovate; laterally compressed

Normal size: 1.9 – 3.5 mm long x 1.0 – 1.5 mm wide

Color: pale straw colored to grayish brown

Texture: glumes usually thin and membranous, covered with long silky hairs

Distinguishing features: glumes strongly keeled, completely enclosing a single floret (excluding the awn)

FLORET

General shape: laterally compressed

Normal size: up to 3.0 mm long

Color: light grayish brown

Texture: thin and membranous

Distinguishing features: palea absent; lemma awn 3.0 – 5.0 (6.0) mm long, bent, attached slightly above base to near mid-point, extending out beyond the apex of the glumes by (1.2) 2.0 – 4.0 mm, bent slightly above apex of glumes

CARYOPSIS

General shape: laterally compressed, D- shaped

Normal size : 1.0 – 1.5 mm long

Color : greenish-brown to brown

Texture: smooth

Embryo: ¼ to ⅓ the length of the caryopsis, located along the dorsal edge of the caryopsis

Endosperm: semi-liquid

Hilum: basal, oval

Distinguishing features: style bases fused together and sometimes visible on free caryopses as a pointed appendage on the apex of the caryopsis

Description by Deborah Meyer
California Department of Food & Agriculture



Alopecurus geniculatus spikelets and caryopses (above). Laterally compressed spikelet (left); the glumes (1) are strongly keeled. The floret is entirely enclosed within the glumes. The lemma awn (2) extends beyond the glumes.



Caryopses in side-view. The caryopsis is laterally compressed with basal oval hilum (3) and embryo (4) about ¼ to ⅓ the length of the caryopsis.

Images by Jim Effenberger