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NOTE

A NEW RECORD OF GRASS *OTTOCHLOA* (POACEAE) TO THE EASTERN GHATS, INDIA

Midigesi Anil Kumar, P. Anjaneyulu & Boyina Ravi Prasad Rao

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During an inventory of grasses in the state of Andhra Pradesh in January 2016, the authors located interesting grass specimens from the forests of Maredumilli, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh. After critical examination, we concluded that these specimens belonged to *Ottochloa nodosa*, a common grass found in the shades of moist deciduous forests in the Western Ghats of Karnataka, Kerala and, Tamil Nadu; and northeastern India. Perusal of published works on grasses of Andhra Pradesh and the Eastern Ghats (Fischer 1928; Bor 1960; Karthikeyan 1989; Gayathri & Pullaiah 1997; Reddy et al. 2008; Kabeer & Nair 2009; Krishnamurthy et al. 2014) revealed that *Ottochloa* has not yet been reported from these areas and hence the present collection forms a new distributional record.

Ottochloa nodosa

(Kunth) Dandy, J. Bot. 69: 55 1931; C.E.C. Fisch. in Gamble, Fl. Madras 3: 1778.1934; Bor, Grass. Burm Ceylon India Pakistan: 318. 1960; Fl. Ind. Enum. Monocot.: 184. 1989; Kabeer & Nair, Fl. of Tamil. Grass. 265. 2009 (Fig. 1 & Image 1).

Type: India, Madras State, R. Wight, 1611 (K000245265, image!).

Specimens examined: 49680 (SKU), 24.xi.2016, Maredumilli forest, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, India, coll. Boyina Ravi Prasad Rao & Midigesi Anil Kumar.

Annual or perennial matt forming herbs. Culms up to 60cm long, decumbent, rooting from lower nodes. Leaf blades elliptic - ovate or lanceolate, base

A NEW RECORD OF GRASS *OTTOCHLOA* (POACEAE) TO THE EASTERN GHATS, INDIA

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unequal or shallowly cordate, apex acuminate, surface glabrous, margins scabrous, 5–10×0.8–1.5 cm; ligules eciliate membranes; sheaths glabrous to sparsely pubescent on surface, densely ciliate on one margin, 2.5–4.5×0.2 cm. Inflorescence of racemes, branches appressed to raceme axis or effuse. Spikelets single or 2–3 in a cluster on secondary branches. Spikelets 2 - flowered, lower barren, upper fertile. Glumes 2, lower ovate, membranous, margins ciliate, 1.6–1.8 mm long, prominently 5 nerved; upper ovate - lanceolate, membranous, margins ciliate, c. 2mm long, 7 - nerved. Lower floret barren, without significant palea; lemma of lower sterile floret akin to upper glume, first length of fertile lemma, membranous, 2.9–3.1 mm long, 7 - nerved. Upper fertile lemma coriaceous, margins thin, involute, 2.8–3 mm long, 5 - nerved; palea coriaceous, glabrous, involute, sub equal to its lemma, 2.5–2.8 mm long, 2 - nerved. Stamen 3, anthers 1.2mm long. Stigma plumose. Caryopsis not seen.

Flowering & fruiting: July–December.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh: East Godavari. India: Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu. World: Africa: west -

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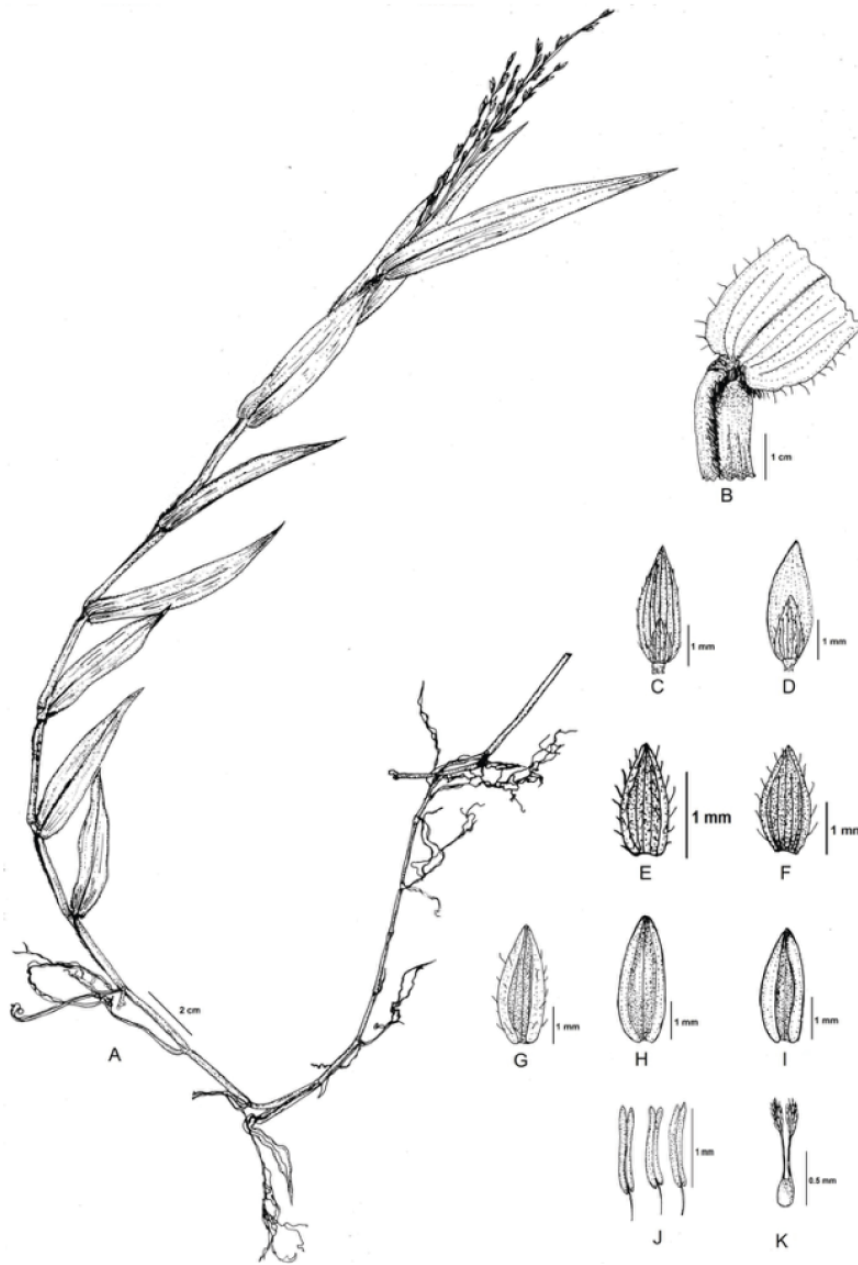


Figure 1. *Ottochloa nodosa*.
A - Habit, B - Ligule & sheath,
C - Spikelet ventral view, D - Spikelet
dorsal view, E - Lower glume,
F - Upper glume, G - Lower lemma,
H - Upper lemma, I - upper palea,
J - Stamens, K - ovary.

central tropical. Asia: (temperate: China and eastern Asia). Asia (tropical: India, Indo china, Malaysia and Papuasias). Australia (Clayton et al. 2006 onwards).

Habitat & ecology: Occasional; along perennial water bodies in the interior of the forest.

Note: *Ottochloa* is closely allied to the genus *Panicum*, but is distinguished from the latter by its shorter upper glumes. The leaf sheaths of *Ottochloa nodosa* are conspicuously ciliate on one margin and are a key vegetative character to identify the species.

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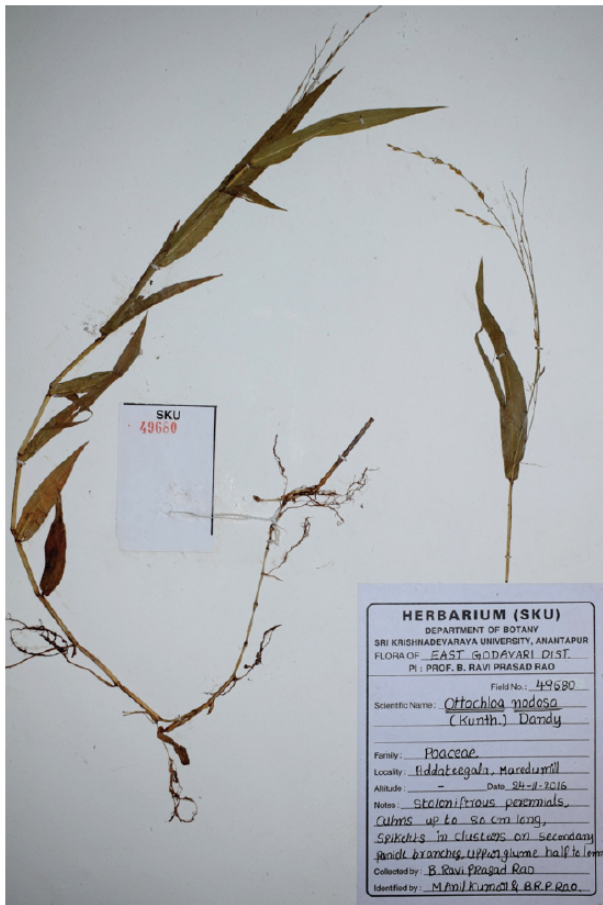


Image 1. Herbarium specimen of *Ottochloa nodosa*

Krishnamurthy, K.V., R. Murugan & K.R. Kumar (2014). *Bioresources of the Eastern Ghats, Their Conservation and Management*. Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, Dehradun, 823pp.

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