

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Paspalum notatum – BAHIA GRASS [Poaceae]

Paspalum notatum Flügge, BAHIA GRASS. Perennial herb, clonal, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, tufted from belowground with shoots closely spaced arising from creeping rhizome, ascending shoots with inflorescence in range 28–35 cm tall; shoots with many basal leaves along rhizome and with ca. 3 cauline leaves with overlapping sheaths below inflorescence, nearly glabrous; rhizome shallow, creeping and horizontal, ca. 5 mm diameter, internodes to 2 mm long; adventitious roots nodal on lower side of rhizome. **Stems (culms):** cylindrical or compressed approaching inflorescence, to 2 mm diameter at node, smooth below or where exposed finely ridged, glabrous. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath of basal leaves rounded on back or somewhat folded, of cauline leaves, notably longer and overlapping, in range glabrous or with several short hairs approaching collar, without lobes (auricles) at top; ligule membranous, truncate, 0.2–0.5 mm long, with a row of straight hairs to 1 mm long along upper side of ligule; collar narrow, on inner surface with a bed of short hairs; blade linear-narrowly lanceolate, in range mostly 50–150 × 2–6+ mm, entire but minutely toothed approaching tip, long-tapered at tip, parallel-veined with veins minutely raised on both surfaces, at base sometimes with several hairs to 3 mm long on margins. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, in terminal, typically 2-branched (rarely several), spike-like panicle, the 2 branches ascending and divergent at 60°, in range 50–75 mm long, solitary spikelets arising in 2 rows on lower side of rachis, spikelet 2-flowered, in range the lower floret sterile and the upper floret bisexual, bracteate; peduncle (culm) somewhat compressed and finely ridged, green, fork at top with some stiff hairs; branch with pulvinus at base, the axis having wavy wings and sinusoidal, ± 1 mm wide, green striped, minutely toothed on margins, glabrous, on lower side somewhat chambered in which spikelets occur; stalk of spikelet (“pedicel”) flattened top-to-bottom, < 1.5 mm long, glabrous or with several inconspicuous puberulent hairs. **Spikelet:** ovoid, ca. 3 × 1.7 mm, glabrous, breaking below glumes; **glumes** 1 (lower glume absent), upper rounded on back, colorless background with 5 green veins. **Lower floret lemma** similar to glume, flat with narrow inrolled margins, ca. 2.5 × 1.5 mm, 5-veined, **palea** absent. **Upper floret lemma** carapacelike ovate and obtuse, ca. 2.2 × 1.5 mm, whitish, faintly 5-veined, minutely textured, **palea** elliptic and flat with wide inrolled membranous margins to midpoint covering flower, ca. 1.9 mm long, 2-veined, ± rounded at tip, outer surface minutely textured. **Flower: perianth (lodicules)** 2, fan-shaped, 0.35 mm long, translucent, low-jagged on upper margin; **stamens** 3, free; filaments threadlike, ca. 2 mm long, white; anthers exerted from spikelet, dorsifixed (medifixed), dithecal, 1.3–1.7 mm long, burgundy, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen white; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, compressed ellipsoid, 0.5 × 0.35 mm, whitish, glabrous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 2, separated by a tongue-like tip of ovary, colorless portion 0.8–0.9 mm long, exerted stigmatic portion bottlebrush-like, 1.5–2.5 mm long, burgundy. **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis), tightly enclosed in spikelet, ellipsoid to slightly obovoid, ca. 2 × 1.5 mm, convex on 1 side (dorsally) and broadly grooved on side facing palea.

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