

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Paspalum setaceum – THIN PASPALUM [Poaceae]

Paspalum setaceum Michx. [var. undetermined], THIN PASPALUM. Perennial herb, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, several-stemmed at base, unbranched from rhizome, in range with inflorescence to 65 cm tall; shoot with several basal leaves and to 3 cauline leaves, the 3–4 lower basal leaves lacking blades, foliage green to yellow-green and thin (shade species) and not scabrous; rhizome shallow, horizontal, knotty, to 4 mm diameter, with internodes mostly 2–4 mm long, whitish or grayish to pinkish and concealed by sheathing, overlapping, persistent, fibrous scales 4–7 mm long, below each nodes with a conspicuous ring of stiff straight hairs; adventitious roots at nodes. **Stems (culms):** to 4 mm diameter (nodes), in range glabrous; internodes hollow. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; prophyll only next to and tightly appressed to rhizome, open and overlapping at base, not keeled, triangular blunt at tip, 3–4 mm long, whitish aging brown with darker veins and most glabrous; sheath open, ridged, long-hirsute between veins and often densely long-ciliate on margins (often not enlarged (putulate) at base, margins not membranous, not lobed (auriculate) at top; ligule membranous, to 1 mm long at peak, with a row of stiff hairs to 2 mm long behind ligule on collar; collar inconspicuous, with hairs next to ligule shorter than hairs on margins to 5 mm long; blade somewhat folded at base and flat above, linear, in range to 225 × 4–13 mm, conspicuously long-ciliate and minutely toothed on margins, the long hairs ± pustulate, acuminate at tip, parallel-veined with midrib concave on upper surface (larger blade) and somewhat raised on lower surface, dull.

Inflorescence: spikelets, in terminal panicle on each shoot, in range mostly with 2 stalked, unequal to subequal racemelike branches appearing terminal at end of culm and lateral, on large shoots also with a long-stalked branch axillary to cauline leaves developing downward, the branches ascending and straight, 25–90 mm long, ca. 2 mm across, with spikelets restricted to lower side in pairs forming a row on each side of a winglike partition, the pairs alternating, each pair having 2 fertile spikelets, each spikelet with 2 florets with the lower one neuter and the upper floret bisexual, bracteate, lacking awns; peduncle (culm above flag leaf base) often flat to concave on 1 side with or without edges, the edges sometimes scabrous (short-ciliate) and purplish; upper-facing of axis bearing spikelets ca. 1 mm wide, green and wavy; stalks of spikelets unequal, ca. 0.25 mm and 1.5 mm long for each pair, scabrous. **Spikelet:** hemispheroid to broadly hemi-ellipsoid, in range 1.8–2 × 1.4–1.8 × 1 mm, obtuse at top, glandular short-hairy on outer surfaces, breaking from stalk below the glume; **glumes** 1, lower glume absent, upper glume cupped-broadly ovate, slightly < spikelet, ca. acute to obtuse, 3-veined with slightly raised midvein and inconspicuous lateral green veins converging at tip, with scattered stalked glandular hairs aging with brown spots around bases of glandular hairs; **lemma** of lower floret flat, like upper glume with 2 green veins converging at tip having 0 veins visible on flat surface, persistent; **palea** of lower floret absent; lemma of upper floret cupped (cowrylike), 1.8–2 mm long with margins clasping upper palea, initially flexible and glossy greenish aging straw-colored, leathery and hardened; palea of upper floret, < lemma, whitish, 2-veined beneath clasping lemma and veins absent on flat surface, glossy and minutely textured (cell outlines). **Flower (upper floret): perianth (lodicules)** 2, narrowly fan-shaped, translucent; **stamens** 3, free; filaments ca. 1.2 mm long, colorless; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, ± 0.8 mm long, cream-colored, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen colorless; **pistil** 1,

ca. mm long; ovary superior, ovoid, ca. 0.4 mm long, translucent, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 2, from below midpoint bottlebrushlike red-purple \pm 0.8 mm long. **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis), tightly enclosed in straw-colored, leathery lemma and palea of upper floret, hemi-spheroid to broadly hemi-ellipsoid, $1.8-2 \times 1.4-1.8 \times 1$ mm, having a swollen white scar at base and with papery covers of upper glume and lemma of lower flower with scattered stalked glandular hairs; achene hemi-ovoid, $\pm 1 \times 0.5$ mm, white.

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