

A NOTE ON *ELYMUS KURAMENSIS* (MELD.) T. A. COPE (POACEAE)
FROM INDIA

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During recent botanical studies in Hemis National Park, Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, one of us (AC) collected few interesting grass specimens from various localities of the park. Subsequent critical examination revealed them to be *Elymus kuramensis* (Meld.) T. A. Cope, earlier known through the type collection, by J. E. T. Aitchison, only from Khewas, Kuram district, Pakistan (Bor, 1960; Cope, 1982). The same has been described and illustrated to facilitate its easy identification in Indian flora.

Elymus kuramensis (Meld.) T. A. Cope, Fl. Pakistan 143: 617. 1982. *Agropyron kuramense* Meld. in Bor, Grasses 663, 691. 1960. Figs. 1. (A, C-G)

Tufted perennials. Culms 40-75 cm high, slender, erect or geniculately ascending. Leaf blades flat or convolute, 5-15 cm long, 2-6 mm wide, sparsely hairy above, glabrous beneath; leaf-sheaths hairy along the margins. Spike lax, 4-8 cm long, erect or slightly nodding; rachis joints minutely scabrid, sometimes glabrous. Spikelets 3-4-flowered, 2.5-3.0 cm long; glumes unequal, lanceolate-elliptic, with prominent scabrid nerves, acuminate-mucronate; lower glume 4-5.5 mm long; upper glume 4-6.2 mm long. Lemmas oblong-lanceolate, 6-9 mm long (excluding awn), scabrid at tip and at nerves, awned; awn 1.0-1.4 cm long, antrorsely scabrid. Palea as long as lemma, 6-8 mm long, scabrid on keels, lanceolate-elliptic, blunt emarginate at tip. Anthers 1.8-2 mm long.

Fl. & Fr. : July August.

Rare, among rocks along water streams, Manjkeo, Rumbak Valley, Hemis National Park, Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, 20.7.2002, S. K. Srivastava & Amit Chauhan 101003 (BSD).

Distrib.: India: Jammu & Kashmir (Ladakh); Pakistan.

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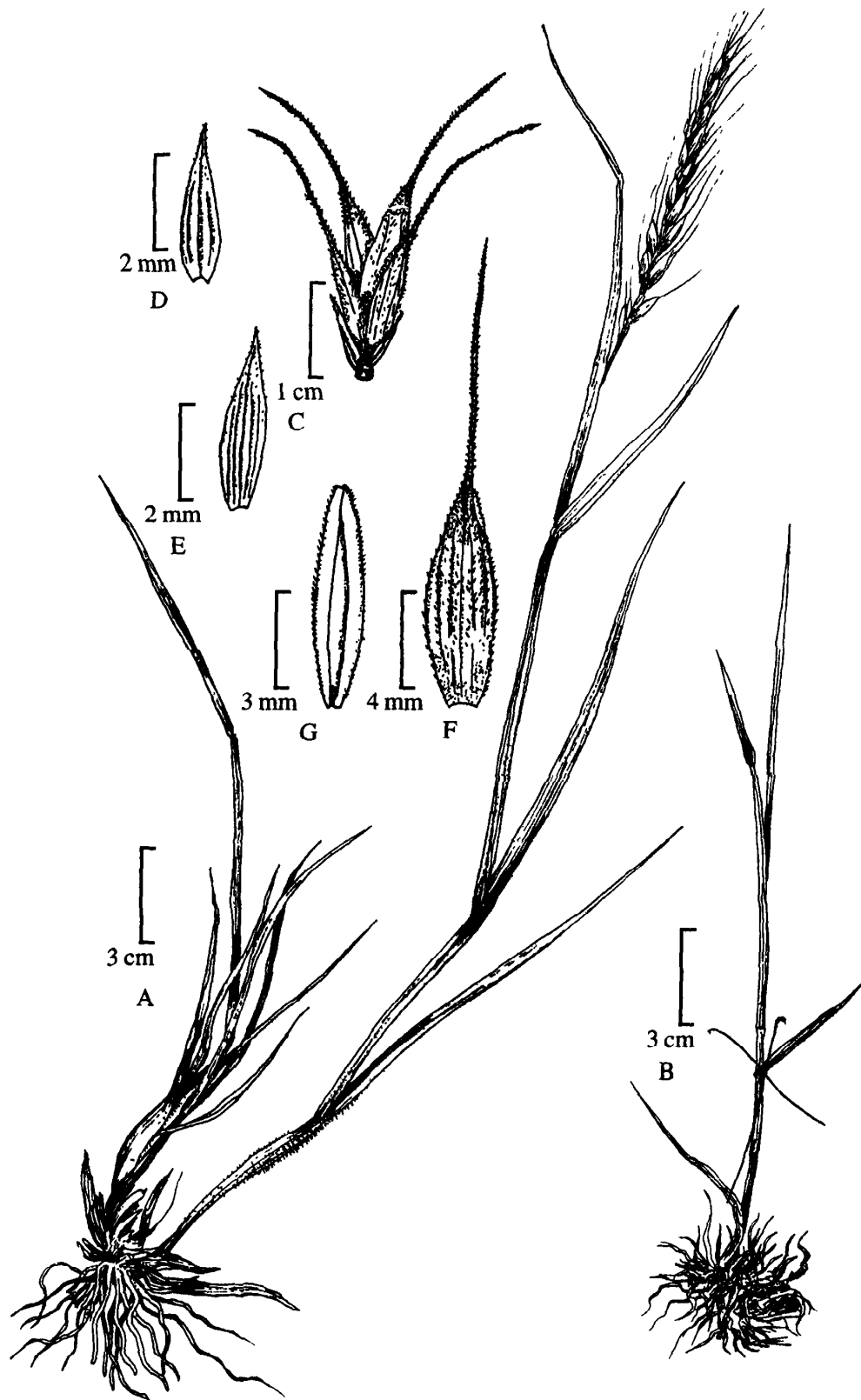


Fig. 1. A, C – G: *Elymus kuramensis*: A. Habit; C. Spikelet; D. Lower glume; E. Upper glume; F. Lemma; G. Palea. B. var. *stokensis*.

Elymus kuramensis (Meld.) T. A. Cope is closely allied to *Elymus caninus* (L.) L. but differs from the latter which has leaf sheath with glabrous margin and palea acute to 2-toothed.

A careful study of the specimens revealed two distinct populations of the species collected from different locations in the national park. The plants in one population fully correspond to the morphological features of *Elymus kuramensis*, while others differ from the typical species in having glabrous leaf sheaths and shorter leaf blades. Thus, it has been described here as a new variety.

var. **stokensis** Amit Chauhan *et* D.K. Singh, *var. nov.*

Fig. 1(B)

Ab *E. kuramensis* var. *kuramensis* vaginis foliorum marginae glabris *et* laminis foliorum curtioribus minus quam 5 cm longis differt.

Differs in having the margins of leaf sheaths glabrous and shorter leaf blades, less than 5 cm long.

Fl. & Fr. : July - August.

Type : India, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Stok village, Hemis National Park, Ladakh, Amit Chauhan 103411(BSD).

Frequent, near cultivated fields and along water channels, Stok village, Hemis National Park, Ladakh, 22.7.2003, Amit Chauhan 103411; on way to Rumbak village, Hemis National Park, Ladakh, 17.7.2002, S. K. Srivastava & Amit Chauhan 100926; Skiu Yokma, Hemis National Park, Ladakh, 29.7.2003, Amit Chauhan 103484(BSD); Choksti area, Rumbak valley, Hemis National Park, Ladakh, 8.8.1990. G. S. Rawat 2853 (Herbarium of Wild life Institute of India, Dehradun).

Distrib. : India: Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh. Endemic.

Elymus kuramensis was so far known through its type collection from Kurram District in North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. Its present record in Indian Flora, therefore, not only constitutes its rediscovery since its type collection in July 1879, but also extends its range of distribution eastwards.

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