

Cynodon dactylon (L.) Pers. (Poaceae)

SPIKELET

Usually consisting of a single fertile floret and sometimes a sterile upper floret attached to the rachilla.

Disarticulation usually below the fertile floret (glumes usually remain attached to the plant, but may occasionally remain attached to the fertile floret)

FLORET

General shape: ovate to D-shaped in outline; laterally compressed

Normal size: 1.9 – 3.1 mm long x 0.75 – 1.2 mm wide

Color: straw-colored, sometimes brown to purple tinged

Texture: lemma cartilaginous, smooth and mostly glabrous

Distinguishing features: lemma strongly keeled, +/- with hairs on keel in upper half, 3-veined; palea glabrous, keeled, 2-veined, +/- equal to lemma length; rachilla ca. ½ the length of the floret

CARYOPSIS

General shape: oval in outline, laterally compressed

Normal size: 1.0 – 1.5 mm long x 0.5 – 0.7 mm wide

Color : yellow to reddish-brown

Texture: dull to lustrous, smooth to minutely striate

Embryo: ca. ½ the length of caryopsis

Endosperm: solid

Hilum: round, basal

Description by Deborah Meyer
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Cynodon dactylon florets and spikelet. Fertile florets have a smooth cartilaginous lemma (1) and palea (2) that completely encloses the caryopsis. Occasionally fertile florets have sterile florets (3) attached to the tip of the rachilla and upper (4) and lower (5) glumes may also remain attached.



Caryopsis in lateral view (left) showing hilum (6), embryo (7), and style base (8). Variation in caryopsis color is shown at right.

Images by Jim Effenberger & Deborah Meyer