

*Echinochloa colona* (L.) Link (Poaceae)

**SPIKELET**

One sterile floret and one fertile floret, disarticulation below the glumes, falling as a unit from the plant

**General shape:** elliptic or ovate to round; dorsal-ventrally compressed, dorsal side arched and ventral side flat (D-shaped in profile view)

**Normal size:** 2.0 – 3.0 mm long x 1.0 – 1.5 mm wide

**Color:** Pale green to straw-colored, +/- with purple tinge

**Texture:** glumes and sterile floret membranous to papery, surface +/- with soft short hairs, veins +/- with short stiff hairs

**Distinguishing features:** lower glume +/- 1/2 the length of the spikelet, broadly triangular, the outer corners wrapping around the base of the upper glume; upper glume ovate, ca. equal to length of spikelet, apex tipped with a short, sharp point; sterile floret equal to length of spikelet, unawned; palea +/- equal in length to sterile lemma, hyaline, keels with short fine hairs

**FERTILE FLORET**

**General shape:** ovate to elliptic; dorsal-ventrally compressed, dorsal side arched and ventral side flat (D-shaped in profile view)

**Normal size:** 2.0 – 3.0 mm long

**Color:** straw-colored to grayish-brown, +/- dark speckled, veins +/- lighter in color; palea similar in color

**Texture:** lemma and palea hardened, glabrous, glossy; apex of lemma thinner and shriveled at maturity

**Distinguishing features:** lemma 5-veined, margins in-rolled over margin of palea, apex tapered to a point, at maturity the tip appears shriveled or laterally pinched

**CARYOPSISIS**

**General shape:** round to obovate, dorsal-ventrally compressed

**Normal size :** 1.2 – 1.6 mm long x 1.0 – 1.3 mm wide

**Color :** light yellow to whitish

**Texture:** smooth, glabrous

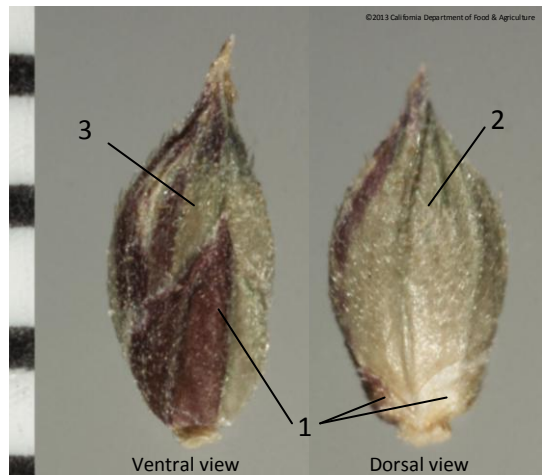
**Embryo:** 2/3 - 4/5 the length of the caryopsis

**Endosperm:** solid

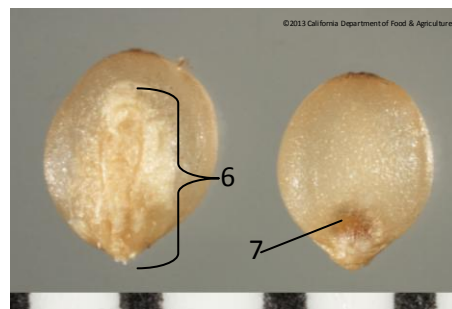
**Hilum:** +/- round

Description by Deborah Meyer

California Department of Food & Agriculture



*Echinochloa colona* spikelets consist of a triangular lower glume (1), upper glume (2) and sterile lemma (3) that are about equal in length, fertile lemma (4) and fertile palea (5).



Caryopsis in dorsal view showing embryo (6) and ventral view showing hilum (7).

Images by Jim Effenberger & Deborah Meyer