

Annuals or perennials. Leaf-blades mostly linear and flat; ligule short, scarious or membranous, glabrous or ciliate. Inflorescence composed of racemes, these digitate or borne upon an elongated central axis, rarely solitary, sometimes with secondary branchlets; rachis flat or triquetrous, bearing the spikelets in appressed groups of 1-5 or more, their lower glume abaxial; pedicels terete or triquetrous, usually smooth or scaberulous. Spikelets lanceolate to oblong-elliptic, flattened on the front, convex on the back; lower glume small or suppressed; upper glume membranous, as long as the spikelet, or much shorter and exposing the upper lemma; lower floret barren, represented by a prominently nerved membranous lemma as long as the spikelet (rarely much reduced), usually hairy, typically with the hairs forming stripes between the 1st and 2nd lateral nerves and along the margin; upper floret bisexual, the lemma chartaceous to cartilaginous, finely longitudinally striate, with its hyaline margins enfolding and concealing most of the pleat, \pm dorsally compressed, usually rounded on the back, subacute to acuminate, rarely rostrate; caryopsis oblong, plano-convex in section, mostly acute to subacute.