

Leptochloa chinensis

Recognize the problem

Family: Poaceae (grass family).

Common names: Chinese sprangletop, Asian sprangletop, red sprangletop.

Thai: หญ้าดอกขาว Ya dok khao (Ang Thong); หญ้าเมื่อดง Ya met nga (Nakhon Ratchasima); หญ้ายางคง Ya Yang khong (Chumphon); หญ้ายอนหุ ya-yonhu, หญ้าลิเก (Ya Li Ke).

A strongly tufted, annual or short-lived perennial grass; hollow, slender and erect stems; with glabrous leaves and fibrous roots; sometimes rooting at nodes; 50-100 cm tall.

Leaves: Smooth, linear, 10-30 cm long; ligule an inconspicuous membrane 1-2 mm long and deeply divided into hairlike segments.

Flowers: Loose panicle, 20-60 cm long, with many spike-like slender branches; two rows of spikelets each 2-3.2 mm long, purplish or green and 3-7 flowered.

Fruits/Seeds: Grain is brown, smooth or wrinkled (6-9 mm long); an abundant seed producer.

Background

Origin: Native of tropical Asia.

Introduced as: Native to Thailand, but introduced into uninfested areas in animal feed.

Habitat: Occurs in croplands, wetlands, swamps or streams in open lowland regions of the tropics. It can also grow in heavy or light soils, along streams and watercourses, in marshy grounds, and in upland and lowland rice fields.

Spread: Mainly by seed, but division of rootstocks during cultivation can give rise to multiple plants.

Invades: Vegetables, cotton, corn, soya beans, sweet potatoes, peanuts, bananas and other crops. However, its ability to withstand waterlogged conditions as well as drained, moist conditions makes it a problem weed in rice.

Impacts: In India, densities of *L. chinensis* at 6 plants/m² resulted in mean yield reduction of rice of 44%. Studies in the Philippines have confirmed that leaf hoppers such as *Nephotettix virescens* and *Recilia dorsalis*, which transmit rice tungro bacilliform badnavirus (RTBV) and rice tungro spherical virus (RTSV), feed on weeds such as *L. chinensis* in fallow fields, providing a pathway to infect the next rice crop. The weed is also an alternative host of the rice blast disease *Magnaporthe oryzae* and reported to have allelopathic effects on some dicotyledonous crops.

L. chinensis inflorescences. (Photo by © Siriporn Zungsontiporn)



L. chinensis infestation in field. (Photo by © Siriporn Zungsontiporn)



Scientific name(s) > **Leptochloa chinensis** (Synonyms: *Poa chinensis*, *Cynodon virgatus*, *Eleusine chinensis*)

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Thailand



Authors: CABI. Edited by Siriporn Zungsontiporn, R. Changsri, P. Prommart, A. Suriyawongtrakarn, T. Jongrukthai, P. Pornponggrueng, P. Triboun
Weed Science Group, Plant Protection Research and Development Office,
Department of Agriculture
tel: 66 2 940 7409 email: siriporn.z@doa.in.th

Edited by Plantwise.