

# Fimbristylis miliacea (=F. quinquangularis)

## Recognize the problem

Family: Cyperaceae (sedge family).

Common names: Lesser fimbristylis, fimbry, grass-like fimbristylis, grasslike fimbry.

**Burmese:** Myet-kun-thee-lay; **Vietnamese:** Cỏ tò te, cỏ chat.

Annual or perennial erect sedge with fibrous root system, without hairs, strongly tillering up to 80&minus;90 cm high.

Leaves: Stiff and thread-like (1.5-2.5 mm wide), up to 40 cm long, no prominent midribs.

Flowers: 6&minus;10 cm long, compound umbel with 6&minus;50 spikelets; spikelets reddish brown, 2&minus;4 mm long and either round or pointed at the tip.

Fruits/Seeds: Three angled straw-coloured or pale ivory nut, 0.2&minus;0.3 mm long. Produces 10,000 seeds per plant which can germinate immediately after reaching maturity. Seeds can remain viable for more than one year.

## Background

Origin: Uncertain.

Introduction: As contaminated seed.

Habitat: Common throughout the tropics; occurs in damp, open waste places.

Spread: By seeds; dispersed by water, wind and human-related activities; seeds are also eaten by cattle and germinate near droppings.

Invades: Most common and abundant in rice plantations; also found in bananas and maize (Taiwan), sugarcane and maize (Indonesia) and sorghum (Malaysia).

Impacts: *Fimbristylis littoralis* is a serious weed in rice. It competes strongly with crops for light and nutrients, can adversely affect rice germination and interferes with crop management. In India, rice yield losses due to *F. littoralis* (together with *Cyperus difformis* and *Scirpus supinus*) were estimated at 9% in transplanted rice in the dry season and 24-32% in direct-sown rice in puddled conditions. The weed can also outcompete native vegetation. *Fimbristylis littoralis* is a secondary host of pests and diseases such as rice earhead bug (*Leptocorisa acuta*), paddy armyworm (*Mythimna separate*) and rice sheath blight (*Rhizoctonia solani*).

Inflorescence. (Photo by ©Chris Parker/Bristol, UK.)



Infestation of lesser fimbristylis in rice. (Photo by ©Chris Parker/Bristol, UK.)



Scientific name(s) > *Fimbristylis miliacea* (syn. of *F. quinquangularis* (accepted name) and *Fimbristylis littoralis*)

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: All Countries



Authors: CABI. Edited by participants from Myanmar and Vietnam at a workshop in Thailand, March 2016.

CABI  
tel: +60 (0)3 894329321 email: cabisea@cabi.org

Edited by Plantwise.