

XYRIS APUREANA KRAL & SMITH, A NEW SPECIES OF *XYRIS* (SECT. *NEMATOPIS*) FROM VENEZUELA¹

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Xyris apureana Kral & Smith, sp. nov.—TYPE: VENEZUELA, APURE, Distrito Pedro Camejo, ca. 2 km S of Caño La Cochina de La Pica along the main road south of Paso de San Pablo to the Río Cinaruco, 6°42'N, 67°48'W, elev. 70 m, morichal and surrounding marshy grassland, 2 March 1979, *G. Davidse & A. C. Gonzalez 15948* (US, holotype; MO, VDB, VEN, isotypes).—FIG. 1.

Herba perennis, laxa, densicaespitosa, glabra. Rhizomata tenuia, breviter vel elongata, ascendente. Radices graciles. Folia linearia, 1.5–3.0 dm longa, erecta vel leviter expansa, subdisticha, vaginis scaporum longiora. Laminae vaginis 5–10-plo longiores, 1–2 mm latae, planae, rectae, longitudine pauci-pluri-costatae et sulcatae, a basi ad medium compressae, apicem versus teretes vel subteretes, apices contracti, angusti rotundati, incrassati, persaepe canaliculati, margines integri, non incrassati; vaginae carinatae, pallide lamprobrunneolae, pluricostatae, praeter costas scariosae, marginibus in laminas gradatim convergentibus, ad apicem ligulam scariosam curtam latam fascientibus, infime gradatim expansae, acies integrae. Vaginae scaporum laxae, tortae, multicostatae, ad apicem dilatatae; laminae breves, rectae. Scapi graciles, teretes, recti vel aliquantum flexuosi, 2.5–3.5 dm alti, 0.5–0.6 mm crassi, olivacei vel rubelli. Spicae pluriflorae, ellipticae, 5–6 mm longae, acutae, bractee subdecussatae, naviculares vel convexae, ecarinatae sed mediane 1-nervosae, scariosae, ferrugineae, erosae; bractee steriles 4, pari infimo oblongo saltem medium spicae aequans, pari intimo ovato ca. 3 mm longo; bractee fertiles ovatae usque ad 4 mm longae; area dorsali lanceolata, ferruginea vel brunneola, bractearum dimidium vel totum aequans. Sepala lateralia lanceolata, valde inequilatera, ca. 4 mm longa, acuta; ala carinali angusta sed fortes, integra. Laminae petalorum late obovatae, 2.5–3.0 mm longae, late rotundatae, valde erosae, cuneatae, luteolae. Stamina bibrachiata, brachiis longipenicellatis. Antherae oblongae, ca. 1.5 mm longae, retusae et sagittatae, filamentis parum longiora. Capsula oblonga, planoconvexa, placenta basalia. Semina anguste oblonga, persaepe curvata, ca. 1 mm longa, translucida, ferruginea, longitudine leviter multicostata.

Perennial, lax, densely caespitose, smooth herb. Rhizomes slender, short to elongate, ascending (this may have to do with degree of depth in substrate!). Roots slender. Leaves linear, 1.5–3.0 dm long, erect or slightly spreading, subdistichous, longer than the scape sheaths; blades 5–10 times longer than the sheaths, 1–2 mm wide, flat, straight, longitudinally few-to-many-costate and sulcate, from base to middle flattened, toward the apex terete or subterete, the apices narrowed, narrowly rounded, thickened, often channelled, the margins entire, not thickened; sheaths carinate, pale shining brown, several nerved, except for the ribs scarious, the margins gradually converging into the blades, at the apex producing a short, broad, scarious ligule, below gradually expanding, the edges entire. Scape sheaths lax, twisted, multicostate, at the apex dilated; blades short, erect. Scapes slender, terete, straight or somewhat flexuous, 2.5–3.5 dm high, 0.5–0.6 mm thick, olivaceous to reddish. Spikes several-flowered, elliptic, 5–6 mm long, acute, the bracts subdecussate, navicular or convex, ecarinate but medially 1-nerved, scarious, ferrugineous, erose; sterile bracts 4, the lowest pair at least half as long as

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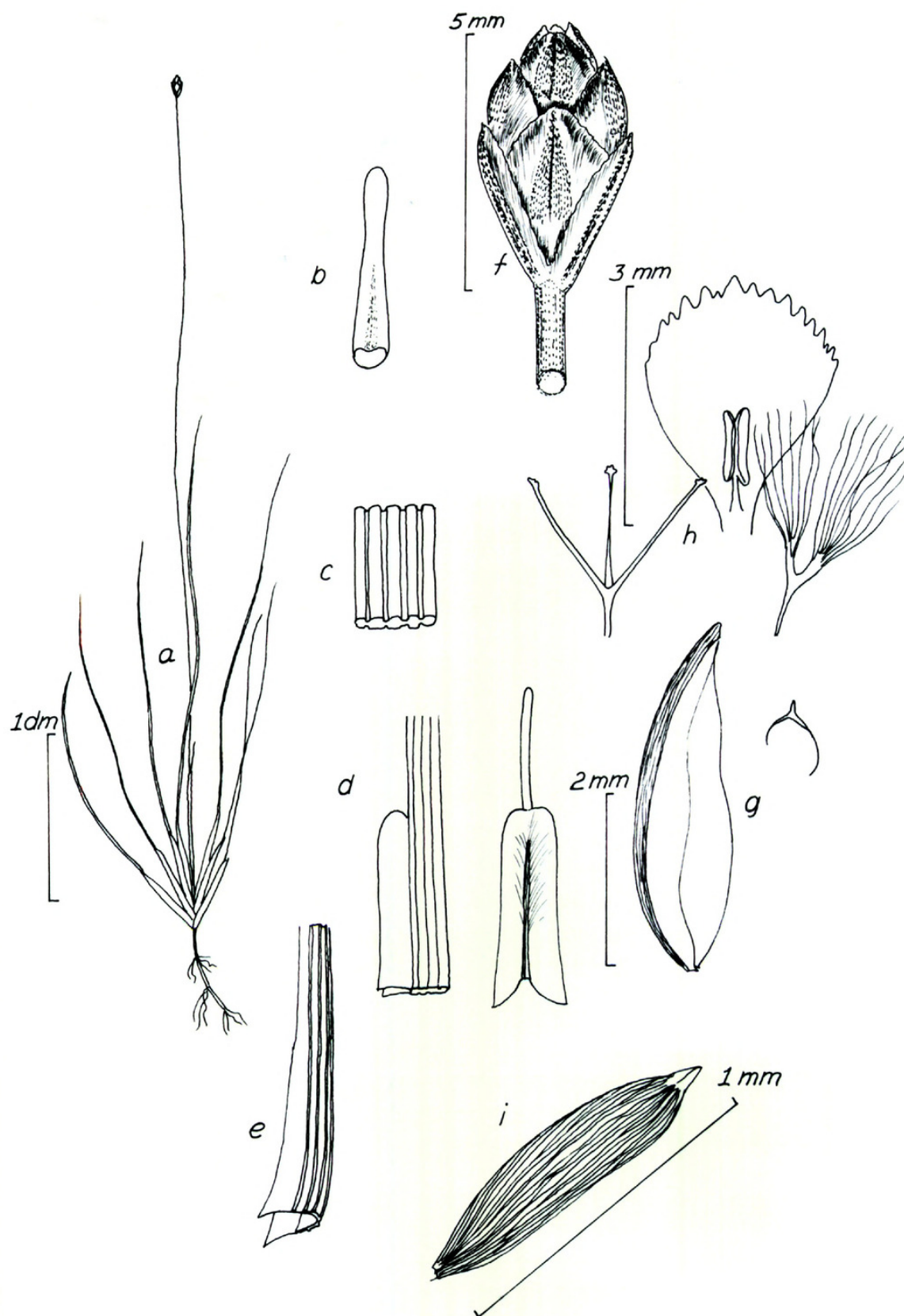


FIGURE 1. *Xyris apureana* Kral & Smith (from Davidse & Gonzalez 15984). a. habit sketch, b. leaf apex, c. sector of mid-blade, d. junction of sheath and blade, e. leaf sheath base, f. spike, g. lateral sepal, h. petal blade and stamen, stylar apex, staminode, i. seed.

the spike, oblong, the inner pair ovate, ca. 3 mm long; fertile bracts ovate, to 4 mm long; dorsal area lanceolate, reddish-brown or brownish, half as long as or equal to the bract. Lateral sepals lanceolate, strongly inequilateral, ca. 4 mm long, acute; carinal keel narrow but strong, entire. Petal blades broadly obovate, 2.5–3.0 mm long, broadly rounded, strongly erose, cuneate, yellowish. Staminal nodes bibrachiate, the branches long-penicillate. Anthers oblong, ca. 1.5 mm long, retuse and sagittate, slightly longer than the filaments. Capsule oblong, planoconvex, placentation basal. Seeds narrowly oblong, often curved, ca. 1 mm long, translucent, ferrugineous, longitudinally finely multicostate.

Due to its flattened leaves, *Xyris apureana* comes to 55. *X. rubrolimbata* in the key to *Xyris* species of the Guayana Highland (Maguire & Smith, 1964), but differs greatly in habit.

If this smooth, elongate-rhizomed, soft-foliaged plant had terete leaves it would bear a strong resemblance to *X. aquatica*, *X. terrestris*, and *X. juncifolia*. The scarious sheath apex (ligular area) is distinctly broader than is the leaf base, but the ligule is adnate nearly to its apex; the keel of the lateral sepal is absolutely entire.

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