

# *Cenchrus echinatus* L.

Family:  
Poaceae

Linnaeus, C. (1753) *Species Plantarum* Edn. 1 2: 1050. Type: Habitat in Jamaica, Curassao.

Common name:  
Mossman River Burr

## Stem

An annual grass that is erect or decumbent at the base, somewhat tufted, branched; roots fibrous; culms 25-90 cm tall, the lower part often prostrate, compressed, rooting at the nodes, often reddish at the nodes.

## Leaves

Leaf sheaths smooth or with few stiff hairs on the margins on the upper portion; ligule 0.5-1.7 mm long, with marginal hairs; blades smooth to hairy, 5-30 x 0.5 to 1 cm, flat, lower surface smooth, upper side rough, slightly hairy at the base.

## Flowers

Inflorescence a spike, dense, cylindric, 2.5-10 cm long, ca. 1 cm in diameter; the burs five to 50 or more, not crowded, almost sessile, globular, densely arranged, 3-6 mm in diameter, 5-10 mm long; the spines or bristles 2-3.5 mm long, usually turning purple with age, sometimes straw-colored, the basal bristles numerous, usually turned downward, inner bristles attached below the middle of the the bur, bristles united for about one-half their length to form a deep cup, hairy, bristles irregular in size and thickness; spikelets two to four (usually three) in each bur, about 5-7 mm long.

## Fruit

Grains with adherent pericarp, ovoid, dorsally compressed, 1.6-3.2 x 1.3- 2.2 mm, truncate, glabrous.

## Seedlings

Features not available.

## Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in WA, NT, CYP, NEQ, CEQ and widespread elsewhere in Australia. Altitudinal range from near sea level to . Prefers sandy soils and grows in openings in rainforest, Eucalyptus forest, various types of woodland and commonly on coastal dunes. Also from Africa, India, Arabia and Asia.

## Natural History & Notes

A widespread and common weed, particularly on sandy soils and at the beach

## RFK Code

4251



Habit and fruit. © Mitchell, Andrew



Fruit. © Richardson, Rob & Fiona.  
www.weedinfo.com.au



herbarium specimen. © DERM

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