



MOLINIA CAERULEA

The two varieties of *Molinia caerulea* subsp. *caerulea* and subsp. *arundinacea* can be separated as below (Trist & Sell 1988; Trist 1990). Subsp. *caerulea* var. *viridiflora* is intermediate between the two subspecies. The ligule, a fringe of hairs, is similar in both subspecies.

Subsp. *arundinacea* (Schrank) K. Richt. (subsp. *altissima* (Link) Domin): Height 70-150 cm; tussock to 20 cm long; lemma 3.5-6 mm; spikelets (3-)4-7.5 mm; panicle length 25-65 cm; leaves 28-70 cm × 4-8.5 mm. Forming dense tussocks in fens, fen scrub and by rivers; scattered throughout S Britain and Ireland.

Subsp. *caerulea* var. *viridiflora* Lej. Intermediate between the two subspecies; height 40-85(-100) cm; forming dense tussock to 30 cm long; panicle length 8-35 cm, dropping; spikelets 3.3-5.5(-6) mm; leaf length 12-48 cm × 2-6.5(-8) mm. Open woodland, valley fens, spring areas and on sand heath in V.cc. 25 and 26, and possibly in S and W England and the Midlands.

Subsp. *caerulea* var. *caerulea*: Height 8-65 cm; lemma 3-4 mm; spikelets 3-5.5 mm; panicle length 1-30 cm; leaves 5-50 cm × 1-6(-8) mm. Widespread.

References Trist, P. J. O. & Sell, P. D. (1988). *Watsonia* **17**: 153-157.
Trist, P. J. O. (1990). *Suffolk Natural History* **26**: 82-84.
Trist, P. J. O. (1992). *Nature in Cambridgeshire* **34**: 61-63.

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