

Aristida adscensionis L., SIXWEEKS THREE-AWN. Annual, fibrous-rooted, cespitose, several-stemmed at base, unbranched above, spreading to ascending, in range 12–30 cm tall; shoots with cauline leaves, purplish red with young inflorescences. **Stem:** cylindric, 0.8–1 mm diameter, often streaked purplish red and green, internodes 7–35 mm long, glabrous. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; prophyll visible at base of each shoot, membranous with broad margins strongly wrapped around stem base, to 14 mm long, broadly margined, strongly 2-keeled depressed between keels, purplish at base and exposed tip, with 2 green veins, short-scabrous along keels; sheath open, 18–30 mm long, becoming purplish red with greenish or purplish red veins, narrowly membranous on margins, often with raised midvein, sometimes with lobes (auricles) at top, the auricles erect from sheath, hemi-elliptic or hemi-circular, ca. 0.5 mm long, with white hairs; ligule = a dense band of white hairs 0.4–1 mm long; blade linear, in range 20–65 × ca. 1 mm, the widest at base, minutely toothed on margins, long-tapered to tip, initially flat becoming inrolled to upper side (involute) when water-stressed, parallel-veined with all veins raised ± equally on upper surface and 3 veins (midrib + 2 laterals) more prominently raised than other veins on lower side, scabrous with short teeth along veins often purplish red veins, upper surface pubescent, lower (exposed) surface glabrous. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, in terminal, contracted panicles, panicle often interrupted in lower part, in range 45–95 × 6–12 mm, with short lateral branchlets, spikelet with 1 floret, bracteate, awned; branchlets with 2–8 spikelets, at flowering erect to ascending, 10–40 mm long and spreading in fruit, minutely scabrous along ridges, without pulvinus at base; stalk of spikelet 0.7–3.7 mm long. **Spikelet:** bisexual, breaking above glumes; **glumes** 2, short-awned, unequal, lower glume narrowly lanceolate, in range 4.7–6.2 × 0.6–0.8 mm, upper glume linear, 6.7–8.8 × 0.5 mm, keeled and in range 1-veined, short-awned at tip, lower glume scabrous along keel; callus ca. 0.5 mm long, densely hirsute; **lemma** 3-awned, linear, in range 5.5–7.3 × 0.3 mm, slightly keeled, scabrous along midvein approaching tip, the awns initially straight and erect, spreading and curved in age, (7–)8–12(–15) mm long (central awn) and 7.4–10.6 mm long (lateral awns), scabrous; **palea** oblanceolate, 0.6–0.9 × 0.2–0.3 mm, translucent with 2 light green veins; **Flower:** bisexual; **perianth (lodicules)** 2, oblanceoloid to narrowly ellipsoid, 0.7–0.9 × 0.2–0.35 mm, semi-translucent, fleshy at anthesis, sometimes asymmetrical at tip; **stamens** 3, free; filaments ca. 1 mm long; anther exerted from palea at base, dorsifixed, dithecal, oblong, 1–1.6 mm long, purplish red, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1, 1.5–1.7 mm long, short-stalked, the stalk 0.3 mm long; ovary superior, subtended by 2 whitish hairs 0.25 mm long, ellipsoid or narrowly ovoid, 0.45–0.7 × 0.15 mm, yellow and light yellowish green, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 2, 0.8–1.3 mm long, stigmatic 2/3 or midpoint, light yellow or pale greenish, narrowly feathery (plumose) with papillate hairs ca. 0.2 mm long. **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis), fusiform, 5–7 mm long, dispersed while hidden within purplish red lemma and palea having the 3 diverging, ascending awns at tip, callus at base white-hirsute. Late February–mid-April.

Native. Annual grass occasionally found in full sun on open ground, e.g., burned slopes, in a very restricted population. *Aristida adscensionis* is distinctive as one of the few grass species locally in which the young plants are purplish red, and there are three awns on the lemma, appressed during flowering later diverging. Some authors treat this as a 3-branched awn. The central awn is slightly longer.

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