

Aristida purpurea Nutt. var. *parishii* (Hitcch.) Allred, PARISH'S THREE-AWN. Perennial herb, fibrous-rooted, several-stemmed at base, cespitose, sometimes branched at lower nodes, erect to ascending, in range 20–50 cm tall; shoots with mostly cauline leaves and a purplish red inflorescence when young, glabrous. **Stems (culms):** cylindric, 0.8–1.5 mm diameter, internodes 30–120 mm long. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath open, of basal leaves < 12 mm long, of cauline leaves 35–90 mm long, with narrow, membranous margins, veiny, glabrous to puberulent or scabrous, without lobes (auricles) at top; ligule membranous, ciliate, 0.3–0.5 mm long; blade of basal leaves highly reduced, acuminate to tail-like (caudate), < 4.5 mm long; collar often with a tuft of long hairs on the margin, the hairs to 2 mm long and sometimes spiraled together; blade of cauline leaves linear, in range 20–100 × 1–2 mm, flat or inrolled when water-stressed, scabrous on margins, parallel-veined with midvein slightly more prominent, upper surface scabrous. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, in terminal panicles, panicle in range 150–240 × 10–80 mm, purplish red when young fading to straw-colored in fruit, lateral branches straight (not wavy), commonly with 2 spikelets per node, in pair with unequal stalks, spikelet with 1 floret, bracteate, awned; lateral branches at base of panicle ascending, 20–90 mm long decreasing upward, positioned by an axillary pulvinus, with ca. 3–7 spikelets (paired spikelets + 1 terminal), upper branches shorter and often with only 1 spikelet and without a pulvinus; stalks of nodal spikelets 1–2.5 mm long, of terminal spikelet 8–11 mm long. **Spikelet:** breaking above glumes; **glumes** 2, unequal, narrowly lanceolate, lower glume in range 4–8 × 0.5–0.7 mm, sometimes with a short awn < 0.6 mm long, upper glume 9.2–12 × 0.5 mm, 1-veined, minutely scabrous along midvein above midpoint, at anthesis red to dark red; callus 0.5–0.7 mm long, densely hirsute with ascending hair from 0.2 mm long at base to 0.7 mm long at top; **lemma** 3-awned, lanceolate, in range 9–11 × 0.5–0.7 mm (excluding awns) tapering to 0.2–0.3 mm wide near tip, glabrous on basal portion (2–4 mm) to minutely scabrous approaching awns, continuous with base of awns; awns 3, subequal, appressed and straight at anthesis spreading in fruit, the central awn erect and 19–31.5 mm long, sometimes with a 90° twist at base, the lateral awns 16–28 mm long; **palea** diminutive, elliptic, ca. 1.3 × 0.4 mm, pale straw-colored, 2-veined. **Flower:** bisexual; **perianth (lodicules)** 2, oblanceolate, 1.3–1.5 × 0.25–0.3 mm, whitish membranous; **stamens** 3, free; filaments ca. 1.5 mm long; anthers exerted sideways from palea and lemma, basifixed, dithecal, linear-oblong, 1.5–2 mm long, orangish, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1, ca. 2 mm long; ovary superior, narrowly ellipsoid, ca. 0.75 × 0.15 mm, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 2, 1.2–1.5 mm long, expanded and flattened approaching tip, with lateral stigmatic lobes ca. 0.2 mm long along most of length. **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis), linear-lanceoloid, 6–7.5 × 0.5–0.6 mm, tan to chestnut brown. March–May.

Native. Rare perennial bunchgrass discovered in 2010 by Carl Wishner at a locality east of SMMNRA Paramount Ranch of April Springs Road (SMM). *Aristida purpurea* has longer awns than does *A. adscensionis*, an annual, but both have the purplish red coloration at the time of flowering.

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