

*Asphodelus fistulosus* L., ONION-WEED. Perennial herb, geophytic, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, caespitose, several–many-stemmed at base, with ascending, densely tufted basal leaves, each shoot potentially with an erect, terminal inflorescence, (15–)40–70 cm tall; shoots 10–15+-leaved, sparsely papillate-puberulent; rhizomes vertical. **Stems:** cylindrical, < 5 mm diameter, short and concealed by basal leaves. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple with sheath; sheath open, membranous, < 15 mm long, with wide wings; blade linear and long-tapered, 120–480 mm long, 2–3 mm wide at midpoint, in ×-section hemi-cylindric to subtriangular at base, approaching tip ± cylindrical but compressed top-to-bottom, with many fine, low ridges, minutely scabrous along larger ridges; in ×-section with huge, water-filled cells in center, appearing hollow or slightly pithy when dried. **Inflorescence:** panicle of racemes, erect, > leaves, racemes ascending, 200–400 mm long, many-flowered, bracteate; peduncle of panicle ± cylindrical, 200–300+ mm long; < 5 mm diameter, tough, glabrous, glaucous, ± hollow; bract subtending raceme nearly sheathing lateral branch, appressed, triangular with tail-like tip, 5–10(–15) mm long, scarious with green midstripe; axes glabrous; bractlet subtending pedicel like bract but reduced, persistent; pedicel ascending, 1–2 mm long increasing to 9 mm long in fruit, jointed at receptacle by a ringlike groove (= abscission zone), glaucous. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, dish-shaped, 15–22 mm across; receptacle ± 2.5 mm long (appearing like part of pedicel), glaucous; **tepals** 6 in 2 whorls, free or fused at base, somewhat dimorphic, 7–10.5 mm long, of outer whorl oblanceolate and 2–3.5 mm wide, of inner whorl narrowly ovate to elliptic and 3.5–5 mm wide, obtuse to rounded at tip, pinkish white with reddish or brownish midstripe; **stamens** 6 in 1 whorl, free or fused to bases of tepals, 5–8.5 mm long, dimorphic, the 3 stamens opposite outer tepals ± 1.5 mm shorter; filaments whitish, conspicuously papillate on outward sides of inflated bases, very slender at tips; filaments fused to outer tepals with tongue-like base appressed to ovary and touching base of style, the erect portion subterminal and narrowly club-shaped (clavate), ± 2 mm long, pale pink to white, smooth; filaments fused to inner tepals flame-shaped, the basal portion narrowly obovate and appressed to ovary but not touching style, ± 1.7 mm long, the erect portion cylindrical and terminal on base; anthers versatile, dithecal, 2–2.3 mm long, orange, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen orange; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, 3-lobed spheroid, ± 1.5 mm, dark green, nectar copious on top of ovary trapped by filament bases, 3-chambered with a shallow medial, longitudinal depression, each chamber with 2 ovules; style erect, tapered to base, 5–7 mm long, pale pink to white; stigmas 3, spreading, spheric, 0.7–1 mm long, light coral or orange-pink, conspicuously papillate. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 3 valves, 6-seeded, ± spheric and 3-lobed on top with depressed center, in range 4.5–5 mm, 3-chambered. **Seed:** 3-sided with curved back and 2 flat faces, 3–3.3 × 1.5 mm, dark brown, each surface with several deep pits. Early March–early August.

Naturalized. A European geophytic perennial occasionally cultivated in gardens of southern California, but which has escaped and thoroughly established at a few localities in SMM. This species is described as an annual or a short-lived perennial, but *Asphodelus fistulosus* produces leaves and flowers every year at a site on Malibu Creek State Park even though plants are mowed before or after they set seed. Leaves are turgid with large water-storing cells at the core; acting as a hydrostat, this design permits leaves to remain

upright even during summer drought, when other herbs have dry, dead aboveground shoots.

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