

*Gastridium phleoides* (Nees & Meyen) C. E. Hubb. Annual, fibrous-rooted, 1–several-stemmed at base but only forming 1 or 2 inflorescences, erect, (15–)25–55 cm tall; shoots glabrous. **Stems (culms):** cylindric, < 2 mm diameter, tough; internodes hollow. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath open, membranous, conspicuously veined, without lobes (auricles) at top; ligule membranous, acute, 2–7 mm long, white-translucent, veiny, irregularly cut; blade linear, (25–)70–130 × 1.5–6 mm, the widest near midpoint, flat, minutely toothed and scabrous on margins, parallel-veined with midrib weakly developed on lower surface, minutely scabrous or with bumplike projections along veins. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, in terminal, compact, panicles, panicle fusiform to cylindric, (20–)35–120 × 3–13 mm, with many short branches and alternate distichous clusters of 3–5 ascending to appressed lateral branchlets at nodes, of many spikelets, spikelet with 1 floret, bracteate, glabrous, awned; main axis concealed by florets and branchlets, glossy yellowish white, smooth; branchlets to 34 mm long, with several–many spikelets, axis minutely toothed; stalk of spikelet short. **Spikelet:** erect, narrowly flamed-shaped compressed side-to-side, glossy, swollen at ovary, breaking above glumes; rachilla extending to middle of palea, long-hairy; **glumes** 2, unequal, long-acuminate, lower glume 5.5–7 mm long and upper glume 3.5–5 mm long, at anthesis open ca. 30°, slightly swollen and glossy at base, typically 1-veined and keeled above midpoint, wide-membranous on margins, minutely toothed along keel, inner surface with a minutely scabrous midridge; **lemma** awned, ovate, 1–1.3 mm long + awns, << glumes, translucent, strigose, truncate and 4-toothed at tip, 5-veined with lateral veins ending in teeth and central vein diverted to awn, strigose, the awn subterminal, 3–5 mm long, exerted < 2 mm beyond lower glume, curved or bent 1 or 2 times (straight), twisted below midpoint; **palea** 1–1.3 mm long, = lemma, translucent, not keeled, 2-toothed, glabrous. **Flower:** bisexual; **perianth (lodicules)** 2, erect, narrowly ovoid to pyramidal, ± 0.4 mm long, colorless, glabrous; **stamens** 3, free, exerted; filaments erect, threadlike, 0.3–0.6 mm long, translucent; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.8–1 mm long, in range light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1, 0.6 mm long; ovary superior, obovoid, pale green, glabrous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 2, ascending, = ovary height, colorless, highly branched. **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis), obovoid slightly compressed front-to-back, 0.8–1 × 0.4–0.5 mm, light golden brown, with a shallow longitudinal groove opposite palea, glabrous; adhering to hairy lemma and glabrous palea; awn weakly attached and separating easily from lemma. Late April–early June.

Naturalized. Annual occasionally observed in range but very localized, e.g., occurring in short patches along roadsides or on recent burns. *Gastridium phleoides*, formerly known as *G. ventricosum*, has a compact inflorescence with slender awns, and at maturity the small fruit is tightly covered by a scarious, hairy lemma, often with the awn still attached. The genus gets its name from the slightly bulging bases of the glume, which also has a curious midridge on the inner surface.

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