

Leptochloa fusca (L.) Kunth subsp. *fascicularis* (Lam.) N. Snow, BEARDED SPRANGLETOP.

Annual or in range perennial herb, fibrous-rooted, many-stemmed at base, ± erect or decumbent, in range to 120 cm tall; shoots sometimes branched and bent (geniculate) at nodes 2 and 3, glabrous, rooting at lower nodes. **Stems (culms):** compressed but cylindric at base, < 8 mm diameter, tough, smooth, generally green but grayish green at nodes and sometimes tinged pinkish above and below nodes, internodes 190–360 mm long; internodes hollow, with air canals below epidermis on 1 or 2 of the narrower arcs of the compressed stem. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath open, typically > internode, minutely scabrous above midpoint along veins, without lobes (auricles) at top; ligule membranous, acuminate to acute, 4.5–7 mm long, splitting to base in several places, sometimes long-ciliate at tip; collar whitish; blade linear, mostly 460–600 × 2–4 mm, flat but keeled at base, becoming inrolled when water-stressed, finely scabrous on margins from base to tip and along veins on both surfaces but denser on lower surface, parallel-veined with 7 principal veins raised on upper surface and midrib raised also on lower surface, midrib at base 0.5–1 mm wide. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, in terminal, ovoid to ellipsoid panicles, panicle in range 300–450 mm long, overtopped by flag leaf, lateral branches ascending and spreading, ca. 25–45, alternate (never whorled), each with 1–22 alternate spikelets appressed, short-stalked, and mostly slightly overlapping, spikelet with 5–9(–10) florets (terminal floret sterile), bracteate, awned; rachis (main inflorescence axis) ± straight to slightly flexuous, ± 1.5 mm diameter at base, ridged, ridges minutely toothed and minutely scabrous; lateral branches racemelike or arising from base of lower branch, 10–125 mm long; branch axis wiry, ridged, short-serrate and minutely scabrous, with a green pulvinus at base on upper side; stalk of spikelet 0.5–1.3 mm long. **Spikelet:** fusiform to elliptic or narrowly lanceoloid slightly compressed, in range 5.5–8.8 × 1–3.5 mm, with florets suberect to ascending at anthesis, breaking above glumes and between lower floret; **glumes** 2, unequal, triangular to lanceolate, in range lower glume 1.5–2.8 mm long and narrowly tapered to an obtuse to truncate or 2-lobed tip and upper glume 2.9–3.3 mm long and acute to obtuse at tip, mostly membranous and pale green or soon whitish, 1-veined, commonly with vein extended 0.1 mm beyond margin and having several minute bristles at tip (lower glume) or with vein extended as a short awn (upper glume), keeled with short teeth along vein; rachilla ca. 0.5 mm long between upper glume and lower floret and to 0.8 mm long between florets; **lemma** elliptic, in range 3–3.5 mm long (not including awn), 3-veined, inrolled at margins, ± keeled along raised midrib, 2-toothed at tip with narrowly acute teeth and having awn extend beyond teeth, pilose below midpoint between margin and lateral vein and along keel, translucent in fruit, whitish aging slightly silvery gray, in range lacking a dark spot at base, the veins green and not converging at tip, the transparent teeth narrowly acute and ca. 0.3 mm long, the awn 0.8–1.5 mm long, greenish at base and whitish above; **palea** membranous, 2–2.8 × 0.4–0.6 mm, 2-keeled, infolded at margins, minutely scabrous and green along keels, pilose between keel and margin. **Flower:** bisexual; **perianth (lodicules)** 2, fleshy, ± trapeziform, narrowed at base, ca. 0.25 × 0.2, colorless; **stamens** 3, free, exerted sideways from between below midpoint of lemma and palea; filaments threadlike, ca. 0.7 mm long, colorless or whitish; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.3–0.4 mm long, light yellow, sacs slightly unequal, narrowly ellipsoid, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen whitish or pale yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, subspheroid-obovoid, ca. 0.25 × 0.15 mm, light green, conic at tip, glabrous, 1-chambered

with 1 ovule; styles 2 from top of ovary but separated by conic projection at ovary tip, 0.8–1 mm long, thickened at base, bottlebrushlike stigmatic from midpoint to $2/3$; stigmas exerted sideways between lemma and palea, ca. 0.5 mm long, whitish and translucent at anthesis. **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis), covered by loose palea and lemma and with rachilla segment attached, ellipsoid compressed front-to-back, 0.8–2 mm long, whitish and smooth; rachilla segment ca. 0.7 mm long. Late July–late August.

Native. Perennial herb or annual occurring in moist places near the coast, most recently collected on the western edge of the range in Ventura County growing on a sandbar in Calleguas Creek. *Leptochloa fusca* var. *fascicularis*, when growing with abundant water, is a tall species, appearing much different in general form from var. *uninervia*, and the similarity of the two varieties is not immediately apparent until the spikelets are examined. B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson