

*Penstemon heterophyllus* Lindl. var. *australis* Munz & I. M. Johnst., FOOTHILL  
PENSTEMON. Subshrub or semishrub, summer-dormant, with many woody stems at base, decumbent to ascending, 25–70(–100+) cm tall; shoots with cauline leaves and also leaves tufted along principal stems (appearing fascicled) on unexpanded axillary shoots, minutely puberulent throughout, lacking glandular hairs. **Stems:** cylindrical, to 3 mm diameter, green turning purplish rose. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, ± sessile, without stipules; blade linear to narrowly oblanceolate, 20–95 × 0.5–4 mm, tapered at base, entire, acute with minute point at tip, with only midrib conspicuous raised slightly on lower surface, sometimes becoming glabrescent. **Inflorescence:** raceme or panicle with paired, several-flowered racemes or also cymes at lower nodes, terminal, with 10 or more nodes having opposite decussate flowers or cymes, bracteate, minutely puberulent; bracts subtending peduncle 2, leaflike; peduncle stemlike, typical < 10 mm long; bracts subtending cyme and bractlet subtending pedicel 1 or 2, leaflike, typically > 15 mm long; pedicel at anthesis 2.5–3.5 mm long increasing 2× in fruit, minutely puberulent, with 2 opposite, shorter bractlets above midpoint, bractlets narrowly lanceolate to oblanceolate (sometimes bractlets subtending a pair of late-formed flowers or undeveloped flowers). **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, ± 10 mm across; in bud corolla yellow; **calyx** 5-lobed, barely fused below ovary; lobes with spreading to recurved tips, overlapping, subequal, ovate to lanceolate, 4–5(–8) mm long, green but with purplish upper surface near tip, acuminate at tip, ± glabrous, persistent; **corolla** 2-lipped, 5-lobed, 23–30(–40) mm long, deep rose or magenta to red-violet and lacking lines or spots, the sinus between lips 8–10 mm deep, glabrous and without a beard; tube 7–8.5 × 2–3.5 mm, the narrowest just below throat; throat 8–10 × 7–9 mm, abruptly constricted at base, somewhat inflated above; upper lip 2-lobed, lobes to 8 mm long; lower lip 3-lobed, lobes rounded, 4–5 mm long; **stamens** 4 fertile + 1 staminode, 2 fertile stamens fused to base of tube and included (upper stamens) and 2 fused to top of tube and exerted (lower stamens), dimorphic; filaments ± 18 mm long (upper stamens) and ± 20 mm long (lower stamens), curved and twisted to become next to ceiling of throat; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, broadly elliptic in outline, ± 3 mm long, dark red-purple with white at center and on margins, at base deeply lobed to filament, strongly papillate on margins, with several short hairs near filament, longitudinally dehiscent across top; pollen pale lavender; staminode fused to top of tube between upper stamens, straight, 13–16 mm long, white, with flared flattened tip, glabrous, **nectary disc** beneath ovary, ringlike, to 0.15 mm tall and scarcely projecting, green; **pistil** 1, 20–25+ mm long; ovary superior, ± conic, ± 2.5 mm long, green, somewhat compressed ⊥ septum above midpoint, glabrous and glossy, 2-chambered, each chamber with many ovules attached to center; style = stamen length, white; stigmas 2, white, papillate. **Fruit:** capsule, septicidal, 2-valved, many-seeded, somewhat compressed-conic, 9–12 × 4–5.5 mm (included beaklike tip), brown, valves veiny and with low midridge. **Seed:** irregularly angled with narrow and broad wings along edges, 1.4–2.2 mm long, brown faces shallowly and irregularly honeycombed. Late April–early July (mid-September).

Native. Woody perennial fairly common in sunny openings of chaparral or edges of southern oak woodland, where it can utilize adequate soil moisture. *Penstemon heterophyllus* var. *australis* grows essentially as a low shrub that dies back to its woody stems during summer drought. Its flowers are brilliant, usually in the purple-violet range, but curiously in bud the corolla initially is yellow before being masked by darker pigments. B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson