

Phalaris minor Retz., LESSER CANARY GRASS. Annual, fibrous-rooted, several-stemmed at base, shoots with erect, terminal, dense inflorescence, in range 30–90 cm tall; shoots mostly with 3–5 basal leaves and to 4 cauline leaves, glabrous, not glaucous. **Stems (culms):** finely ridged, to 3 mm diameter, tough, internodes to 200 mm long, upper portion of internode and swollen node visible (not hidden by leaf sheath), nodes purplish; internodes hollow. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath open with margins overlapping at base, distinctly < internode, finely ridged, membranous margin wider on hidden margin, without lobes (auricles) at top; ligule membranous \pm truncate and jagged, 5–10(–12) mm long, not scabrous; collar rounded, whitish; blade linear and long-tapered, in range 55–160 \times 4–11 mm, the widest near sheath, flat, subentire to minutely scabrous on margins, parallel-veined with midrib slightly raised on lower surface only near base, smooth. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, in terminal, dense panicles, panicle broadly lanceolate to cylindric (ovoid), spikelike, 35–60 \times 8–12(–15) mm in fruit, with alternate distichous lateral branches, lateral branches ascending, densely layered, condensed and each repeatedly forked, to 12 mm long, often with 20+ strongly flattened spikelets with broad side facing outward, spikelets all with 2 florets with lower floret sterile and upper floret bisexual, spikelet whitish initially with 3 prominent green stripes on outer side of spikelet, bracteate, lacking awns; peduncle to 200 mm long, at anthesis sometimes concealed by sheath of flag leaf and ligule touching the lowest spikelets; bract subtending the lowest lateral branch cuplike, to 1 mm long, sometimes with rim purple-red; rachis glabrous, branch and branchlet axes and spikelet stalks scabrous with many ascending short teeth, yellowish; stalk of spikelet < 1 mm long. **Spikelet:** breaking above glumes as 1 unit (lemma of sterile floret + fruit-bearing fertile floret); **glumes** 2, strongly keeled and flattened, \pm broadly lanceolate or elliptic to obovate in outline, mostly 4–5 mm long, translucent-membranous, 3-veined with 1 curved green vein along keel to narrowly acuminate tip and 1 straight green vein on each side not converging at tip, winged above midpoint, the wing 0.3–0.5 mm wide, sometimes irregular with a small shoulder approaching glume tip, scabrous along keel and wing, minutely toothed on inner margins approaching tip; **lemma** (sterile floret) appressed to lemma of fertile floret, awl-shaped, \pm 1 mm long (appearing longer with hairs at tip), short-hairy but back glossy and glabrous, persistent; **lemma** (fertile floret) strongly keeled and symmetrically folded along midvein, in range ovate in outline and ca. 3 \times 1.2 mm, 5-veined and greenish-membranous, glossy, short-villous with upward-appressed hairs, internally glabrous; **palea** (fertile floret) keeled and keel-shaped in outline (folded between veins), ca. 2 mm long, membranous except having 2 closely spaced, green veins along keel, keel short-villous. **Flower:** bisexual; **perianth (lodicules)** typically absent; **stamens** 3, free; filaments slender but somewhat stiff, \pm 4 mm long, white; anthers fully exerted, dorsifixed, dithecal, 1.7–2.4 mm long, pale light yellow, dehiscent only near tip; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1, 3.5–4 mm long; ovary superior, narrowly ovoid, 0.5–0.7 \times 0.3–0.4 mm, pale yellowish green, tapered to style, glabrous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 2, \pm fused at base, exerted from tip of keeled palea and lemma, ca. 3 mm long, colorless, straight and glabrous to above midpoint and feathery-stigmatic (plumose) above midpoint. Early April–late May.

Naturalized. Annual collected only several times in range on margins of standing bodies of water, e.g., Lake Sherwood (SH) and Day Canyon (SH). *Phalaris minor* is a much

shorter plant and not clump-forming like the common perennial *P. aquatica*. These two species are the only *Phalaris* in North America that have only two florets, and therefore only one sterile floret per spikelet, which is easy to distinguish when a spikelet is dissected or attached to the fruit dispersal unit. The wing on the glume is more irregular in *P. minor*, and if adequate magnification is available, anthers are shorter, and lodicules do not appear to be present, as compared with its larger cousin, also from the Mediterranean Region.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson