

Polypogon monspeliensis (L.) Desf., RABBITSFOOT GRASS. Annual, fibrous-rooted, several-stemmed at base, ± erect to decumbent, 10–70(–100) cm tall; shoots essentially glabrous. **Stems (culms):** cylindric, < 2 mm diameter, tough, bent (geniculate) at nodes, internodes 90–185 mm long; internodes hollow. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath open, with margins overlapping most of length and membranous, 8–140 mm long, shallowly ridged, without lobes (auricles) at top, of flag leaf inflated; ligule erect, membranous, jagged on obtuse to acute margin, in range 1.8–11 mm long, sometimes split to midpoint or more, minutely scabrous-puberulent on back (abaxial surface); collar mostly indistinct but with wavy margin; blade linear to lanceolate-linear, 30–250 × 4.5–10(–12) mm, the widest near base, flat, minutely toothed on margins, acuminate at tip, parallel-veined with veins raised on both surface but lacking a midrib, short-scabrous. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, in terminal panicles, panicle initially narrowly lanceoloid to narrowly ellipsoid, 20–140 × 10–20 mm, becoming lobed as branches spread, with to 4 orders of branching, initially dense with rachis totally concealed, primary branches alternate distichous in semi-whorls of 3–7 at each node, spikelet with 1 subsessile floret, bracteate, awned; rachis striped (corrugated), glabrous; axes with axillary pulvinus, primary branch axis 5–25 mm long, striped, short-strigose or scabrous, other axes shorter, short-strigose, stalk of spikelet 0.2–1 mm long. **Spikelet:** erect, not compressed, breaking below glumes; **glumes** 2, awned, subequal, oblanceolate, 1.6–2.3(–2.7) mm long, at anthesis > floret, green with membranous margins, 2-lobed at tip, the lobes rounded or acute and 0.1–0.2 mm long, 1-veined, weakly keeled on back at base and rounded above midpoint, short-strigose with hairs extending beyond tip, minutely scabrous on margins and along midvein, the awn arising between lobes at tip, flexuous-wavy to straight, 4–8.5 mm long, colorless; rachilla not prolonged beyond palea; **lemma** short-awned, membranous, lanceolate, 0.9–1.1(–1.5) mm long, transparent, glossy and smooth on back, obscurely 5-veined, obtuse to truncate and short 5-toothed at tip, the awn ± terminal, in range 0.5–1.1 mm long; **palea** membranous, ovate, ca. 0.1 mm < lemma, inconspicuously 2-veined, not 2-keeled, minutely 2-toothed. **Flower:** bisexual; **perianth (lodicules)** 2, membranous and lanceolate, ± 0.6 mm long; **stamens** 3, free; filaments threadlike, ca. 1 mm long, colorless; anthers exerted, dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.5–0.7 mm long, yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1, 0.8–1.1 mm long; ovary superior, obovoid, 0.3–0.4 mm long, colorless or pale golden yellow, glabrous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 2, ascending, narrowly separated 0.1 mm, 0.5–0.7 mm long, colorless or white, conspicuously feathery nearly to base. **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis), obovoid to ellipsoid, 0.9 × 0.35–0.4 mm, orangey brown (reddish), glabrous, with shriveled remnants of stigmas persisting at tip, obscurely wrinkled but lacking irregular longitudinal ridges. Late April–early August.

Naturalized. Annual very common throughout range growing abundantly in wet soil along creeks and drainage ditches. *Polypogon monspeliensis* is easily recognized by its soft inflorescences, hence the common name rabbitsfoot grass. It has one floret per spikelet, and the spikelet is born on a very short stalk. This is one of the few local grass species having awned glumes. The shorter, slender awn on the transparent lemma arises at or near the tip, whereas in closely related *Agrostis*, the lemma awn arises below the midpoint. B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson