

*Polypogon viridis* (Gouan) Breistr., WATER BEARD GRASS. Aquatic perennial herb, evergreen, clonal, without obvious rhizomes, fibrous-rooted, several-stemmed at base, clumped to cespitose, erect to decumbent, 10–75 cm tall; shoots glabrous; with adventitious roots at lower nodes. **Stems (culms):** cylindric, < 2 mm diameter, tough, internodes 35–90 mm long; internodes hollow. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath open, shallowly ridged, with only outer margin membranous, without lobes (auricles) at top; ligule membranous, truncate, 1.2–4.5 mm long, often with 1 or 2 splits to base, irregularly toothed, minutely scabrous; blade linear-lanceolate, 25–80(–200+) × 2.5–5 mm, the widest near base, flat, minutely toothed and scabrous on margins, long-acuminate at tip, parallel-veined with midrib raised on lower surface, upper surface minutely scabrous along veins. **Inflorescence:** spikelet, in terminal, open panicles, panicle lanceolate in outline, 20–70 × 6–30 mm, many-branched, interrupted with distichous semi-whorls of 3–10+ ascending to spreading lateral branches, of many spikelets, spikelet with 1 floret, bracteate, glabrous, lacking awns; lower main axis concealed by ascending branches, striped (corrugated), glabrous or sparsely minutely scabrous; major branches spreading, to 25(–40) mm long, striped, with axillary pulvinus, branchlets minutely scabrous. **Spikelet:** erect, not compressed, breaking below glumes; **glumes** 2, subequal, lanceolate, 1.2–1.6 mm long, at anthesis > spikelet, green with membranous margins often aging purplish, truncate to obtuse at tip, short-strigose and minutely scabrous along midvein; rachilla not prolonged above palea; floret sessile; **lemma** membranous, lanceolate, 0.9–1.2 mm long, 5-veined, 5-toothed; **palea** membranous, 0.7–1 mm long, lemma slightly > palea, 2-veined, not 2-keeled, 2-toothed. **Flower:** bisexual; **perianth (lodicules)** 2, membranous, lanceolate, ± 0.3 mm long; **stamens** 3, free; filaments threadlike, initially < 0.5 mm long increasing to become exerted, whitish; anthers exerted from top of lemma, dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.3–0.5 mm long, pale yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen whitish; **pistil** 1, 0.7–0.9 mm long; ovary superior, obovoid, ± 0.3 × 1.5 mm, glabrous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 2, ascending, narrowly separated 0.1 mm, 0.4–0.5 mm long, conspicuously feathery nearly to base (plumose). **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis), oblanceoloid to ellipsoid slightly compressed, 0.6–0.8 × 0.3–0.4 mm, orangey brown (reddish), glabrous, with shriveled remnants of stigmas persisting at tip; fruit wall finely wrinkled to form irregular longitudinal ridges. Mid-January–late September.

Naturalized. Perennial herb occurring commonly in very shallow water and wet soil along creeks and drainage ditches throughout the range. *Polypogon viridis*, formerly known as *Agrostis viridis* Gouan and *A. semiverticillatus* (Forssk.) C. Chr., is an evergreen perennial that has no perennating rhizomes but instead forms nodal adventitious roots at lower nodes of its branches. Water beard grass can be found in flower somewhere in range most weeks of the year, resting only during the cooler, darker months of late fall and winter.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson