

Microseris D. Don SILVERPUFFS

Microseris douglasii (DC.) Sch. Bip. subsp. *tenella* (A. Gray) K. L. Chambers, TENDER SILVERPUFFS. Annual, taprooted, rosetted with erect leaves, several-stemmed at base, acaulous and \pm scapose with 1–several erect inflorescences, in range 15–37 cm tall; shoots with numerous small, finely stalked, watery hairs drying mealy, latex milky. **Leaves:** helically alternate, unlobed to pinnately lobed, petiolate, without stipules; petiole flaring at base but otherwise indistinguishable from tapered leaf base, flared portion 1.5–5 mm long, finely long-woolly in axils, membranous on margins; blade linear or oblanceolate-linear to oblanceolate (lobed leaves), 15–120 \times 2–12 mm, long-tapered at base, entire to 1–5-lobed per edge with sinuses 1/3–1/2 way to midrib, broadly acute at tip, pinnately veined with midrib raised on lower surface and other veins obscure (linear leaves) or faint, surfaces mealy or becoming glabrate. **Inflorescence:** heads, scapose with head terminating long peduncle, head ligulate, 12–18 mm across, fully nodding in bud, at anthesis horizontal, > 35–110+ flowered; peduncle cylindrical, = plant height, < 2 mm diameter, herbaceous, striped, mealy, without bracts along axis or subtending head (no calyculus); **involucre** at anthesis bell-shaped, 10–12 mm long, becoming ovoid while fruits developing, phyllaries \pm 25 in 3–4 series, grayish green but often purple on exposed midribs, outer phyllaries triangular, 2.5–4.5 \times 1–1.5 mm, with conspicuous midribs, often mealy, inner phyllaries \pm 13 in 2 series, overlapping, subequal, narrowly lanceolate, 9–11 mm long (hidden ones often the shorter ones), ridged, membranous on margins, conspicuously dark reddish to black-hairy on concealed surfaces, \pm acute and red-hairy to black-hairy on exposed tips, reflexed in fruit; receptacle at anthesis flat becoming convex in fruit, lacking bractlets (paleae), with dark hairs between ovary bases, hollow beneath receptacle, pitted during fruit dispersal. **Ligulate flower:** bisexual, bilateral, 7–8.5 mm long; **calyx (pappus)** of 3–5 bristles, 3.5–5 mm long, slightly overlapping at expanded base, the base at anthesis 0.25–0.3 mm long, green, the bristles colorless to pale green or whitish, minutely scabrous with upward-pointing hairs; **corolla** minutely 5-toothed, strap-shaped, 6–7 mm long, readily withering; tube slender, 2.3–3.5 \times 0.2–0.3 mm, pale yellow to whitish, tapered to base, with scattered short hairs; throat ca. 0.25 mm long, slightly flared, yellowish; limb ascending or spreading (of outer flowers), oblong, 3.2–4.3 \times 1.1–1.8 mm, minutely 5-toothed at truncate tip, pale pink with 5 dark rose veins (outer 15–25 flowers) or pale yellow with 5 faint veins (inner flowers), with some hairs on basal 1 mm; **stamens** 5, fused to top of corolla tube, exserted; filaments 0.3–0.8 mm long, yellowish; anthers fused into cylinder surrounding style, basifixed, dithecal, 1–1.4 mm long, yellow, arrow-shaped at base, acute at tip, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, oblanceoloid, 0.7–1.8 mm long, whitish with greenish at base, 10-ribbed, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; style 7.5–9 mm long, exserted 0.5–1.5 mm above anthers, 2-branched, colorless to translucent pale yellow and glabrous below anthers, light yellow with upward-pointing (antrorse) bristles 0.1 mm long from base of anthers to tip, 2-branched, the branches spreading, 0.3–0.5 mm long, antrorsely pubescent on outer faces, smooth (at 10 \times) and stigmatic on inner face. **Fruits:** cypselae, with 3–5 ascending pappus scales; fruit body truncate-oblanceoloid, in range 3.3–4.3 mm long, light brown to grayish brown, 10-ribbed, often with several, scattered dark purple spots, the ribs minutely scabrous, the base hemispheric, wider than ribbed portion, hard, whitish; pappus 4–5 mm long, with long

bristle and expanded base, base scalelike, deltate to ovate, $0.4-1 \times 0.25-0.4$ mm, scarious, minutely jagged and sometimes incurved on margins, bristle with minute, ascending barbs. Late March–early May.

Native. Annual occurring sporadically in grasslands during good rain years, along rills of cracking adobe clay from Thousand Oaks to Agoura Hills, where it may occur with other interesting natives such as *Hordeum intercedum* and *Erodium macrophyllum* and the more common *Achyrachaena mollis* and *Deinandra fasciculata*. Most available habitat is, unfortunately, choked out by naturalized grasses and mustards. *Microseris douglasii* subsp. *tenella* has heads that are nodding in bud, may become horizontal for morning flowering (overcast days), become nodding again during fruit development, and then are fully erect to display the ripe fruits. The pappus scale is about one millimeter long beneath the bristle, and the light brown cypselae of this subspecies are widest near the midpoint. The dark-colored villous hairs in heads are actually dark red and not black.

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