

Poa L. BLUEGRASS

Poa annua L., ANNUAL BLUEGRASS. Annual (with adequate water persisting into next growing season), fibrous-rooted, several-stemmed at base (appearing many-stemmed when plant growing in clump), cespitose and densely tufted, branches decumbent to spreading often rooting at base, to 25 cm tall; gynomonoecious; shoots glabrous; adventitious roots at basal nodes. **Stems (culms):** cylindrical to slightly compressed, < 2 mm diameter. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath or lower leaves reduced to only sheath; prophyll = membranous closed sheath (no blade), linear in outline, membranous, to 11 mm long, 2-keeled and concave between keels, minutely short-toothed along keel; sheath of foliage leaves closed at least to 1/3 increasing to 2/3 (upper leaves), 20–66 mm long, rounded, lacking lobes (auricles) at top; collar inconspicuous; ligule membranous, obtuse to truncate, 0.5–3 mm long, milky translucent, continuous with sheath margins, smooth, glabrous; blade linear, 40–100 × (1–)2.5–5.5 mm, the widest several mm from sheath, initially folded becoming flat, entire, prow-shaped at tip, parallel-veined with midrib somewhat keeled above midblade. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, in terminal, open, paniclelike arrays, array lanceoloid to narrowly ovoid in outline, 70–95 × 28–65 mm, with 2(3) lateral branches at lower nodes gradually reduced to 1 branchlet or spikelet at tip, with crowded to loosely arranged spikelets, spikelet stalked to sessile, with 2–6 florets, lacking awns; peduncle 43–85 mm long; rachis initially compressed aging cylindrical, glabrous; branches ascending to spreading, to 60 mm long, decreasing upward, with yellowish pulvinus at base, smooth and glabrous (sparsely scabrous); stalks 0.2–5 mm long, with conspicuous swelling beneath spikelet. **Spikelet:** initially lanceoloid compressed side-to-side, 3–5 mm long, with spreading florets ovate to somewhat rectangular, lower florets and generally intermediate florets bisexual, other florets pistillate to vestigial, breaking above glumes and between florets; rachilla cylindrical, 0.8–1.1 mm long to 0.2–0.8 mm long for terminal rachilla extending beyond upper floret, whitish, glabrous, smooth; glumes unequal, lower glume broadly lanceolate, 1.4–2 mm long and acute at tip, upper glume ovate to obovate, 2–2.5 mm long and rounded at tip, lower glume < upper glume and < lower lemma, green + membranous on margins and at tip, keeled to weakly keeled minutely scabrous above midpoint, lower glume 1-veined or weakly 3-veined, upper glume 3-veined, the veins not converging at tip; **lemma** lanceolate, 2.5–3.2 mm long (lowest floret) decreasing to 2–2.5 mm long (upper floret), distinctly keeled, membranous and entire on margins, 5-veined, obtuse or notched at tip, sometimes tinged red-purple in membranous tissue, short-villous woolly on veins and typically glabrous between veins; **palea** membranous, 0.1–0.5 mm < lemma, 2-keeled and 2-veined, veins green, keels densely short-villous, sometimes with hairs between veins at palea base. **Flower:** bisexual or pistillate; **perianth (lodicules)** 2, teardrop-shaped and bulbous to above midpoint, 0.4–0.5 mm long, colorless; **stamens** 3, free, or vestigial (pistillate florets); filaments threadlike, 2–2.5 mm long, white to colorless; anthers basifixed, dithecal, narrowly oblong, 0.7–1.2 × 0.3 mm, light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary ± spheric, ca. 0.35 mm, light transparent green; styles 2 or fused for ca. 0.1 mm at base, whitish to colorless; stigmas feathery (plumose). **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis), enclosed in lemma and palea, lanceoloid-ellipsoid, ca. 1.8 × 0.6 mm, grayish brown, short-tomentose at tip; dispersal unit including rachilla segment opposite palea.

Naturalized. Annual lawn grass that has become an occasional weed throughout the range. *Poa annua* is a glabrous plant with closed leaf sheaths, flat blades (initially folded), and an obtuse ligule that is continuous with the sheath margins (decurrent). The lemma has hairs along the five veins, and the palea is densely short-hairy along the two keels. A spikelet of annual bluegrass is awnless and typically has three to five florets; the lower florets are bisexual and the upper ones are either pistillate or sterile. Each fruit is dispersed within the lemma and palea, and the unit also includes the short rachilla segment that is opposite the palea.

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