

## Vascular Plants of Williamson County

*Festuca octoflora* var. *glauca* – SHORT-AWN SIXWEEKSGRASS, SIXWEEKS FESCUE [Poaceae]

*Festuca octoflora* Walter var. *glauca* (Nutt.) Fern., SHORT-AWN SIXWEEKSGRASS, SIXWEEKS FESCUE. Annual, fibrous-rooted, several-stemmed at base, cespitose, shoots often somewhat bent at nodes (geniculate), in range 7–20 cm tall; shoots with slender basal leaves and lower cauline leaves having blades inrolled with lower surface exposed (water-stressed or aging), glabrous or nearly so. **Stems (culms):** cylindric, at swollen node to 0.4 mm diameter, node pale green and glabrous, internodes often colorless to midpoint and with green stripes above, sparsely puberulent mostly above midpoint of internode.

**Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath open, < internode, with 1 wide membranous margin, sparsely minutely scabrous along principal veins, without lobes (auricles) at top; ligule truncate, 0.3–1 mm long, minutely jagged; blade linear, < 5–100 × 0.5–1 mm but becoming inrolled so appearing narrower and cylindric, parallel-veined with ca. 5 veins, upper surface sparsely puberulent, lower surface glabrous. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, in terminal panicles, panicle 40–160 mm long, often dense with overlapping spikelets appressed on closely spaced lateral branches, 1 branch per node, spikelet with (4–)7–12 florets, bracteate, glabrous, awned; stalk of spikelet (“pedicel”) to 1.2 mm long. **Spikelet:** with florets conspicuously alternate distichous (imbricate), oblong compressed side-to-side, mostly 5.5–7 mm long (excluding awns), breaking above glumes and between florets, awned; **glumes** 2, unequal, lower glume keeled linear-lanceolate, ± 2–2.5 × 0.4 mm and 1-veined, < lemma (ca. 1/2 lemma), tip colorless with minute scabrous teeth, upper glume lanceolate rounded on back, ± 2.5–4 × 1 mm and 3-veined, > lower glume, lateral veins not converging at tip; rachilla minutely puberulent with ascending hairs, segments 0.5–0.7 mm long; **lemma** awned, lanceolate, ± 3–5 mm long, 5-veined or 7-veined but only midvein to tip, ovate rounded on back, mostly 4–5 mm long + awn, 5-veined or 7-veined, center colorless and margins membranous with a strip of green between having a pair of closely spaced parallel veins (visible on floret), often minutely scabrous above midpoint and margins (rarely so on the lowest floret), awns of the lowest floret short and commonly < 0.5 mm long, of other florets mostly < 2 mm long, awns initially whitish aging brownish; **palea** membranous, lanceolate with 2 margins folded flat, to 3.5 mm long, slightly < lemma, 2-veined, veins green, minutely scabrous along folds, acute to 2-toothed at tip, the teeth < 0.2 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, cleistogamous; **perianth (lodicules)** 2, conic, ca. 0.3 mm long, colorless; **stamens** in range 1, free; filaments threadlike, < 0.5 mm long, colorless; anther dorsifixed, dithecal, ± 0.3 mm long, colorless, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen colorless; **pistil** 1, 1–1.2 mm long; ovary superior, heart-shaped slightly compressed, 0.4 × 0.3 mm, colorless, glabrous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 2, touching anther, widely spaced at top of ovary, colorless, papillate nearly to base. **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis) dispersed within short-awned floret with persistent rachilla segment, sometimes also dispersed retaining a terminal sterile floret; achene lanceoloid compressed front-to-back, ca. 2.5 × 0.7 mm (< palea), having a whitish short-hairy flap at top.

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