

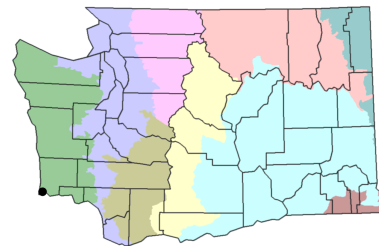
***Poa unilateralis* Scribn. ex Vasey *ssp. pachypholis***

(Piper) D.D. Keck ex Soreng  
synonym: *Poa pachypholis* Piper  
ocean-bluff bluegrass

Poaceae - grass family

status: State Threatened, BLM sensitive

rank: G3TNR / S2



**General Description:** Densely tufted perennial bunchgrass 5-40 cm tall, without stolons or rhizomes. Leaves mostly basal, blades 1-5 mm wide, with prow-shaped tips, margins usually rolled inward. Sheaths closed for 1/10 to 1/5 their length, hairless, smooth. Ligules 2-6 mm long.

**Floral Characteristics:** Panicles 3-7 cm, nearly cylindrical, congested with (20) 30-80 (120) spikelets. Spikelets 4.5-7 mm long, with 3-5 flowers. Glumes lanceolate, slightly unequal in length, shorter than the first flower, distinctly keeled, keels papillate or roughened. Lemmas 3-4.5 mm, lanceolate, distinctly keeled, long-hairy on the keels and marginal veins for greater than 1/3 the length of the lemmas. Callus with a crown of hairs. Flowers July to August.



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,  
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**Identification Tips:** *P. unilateralis ssp. pachypholis* can be distinguished by its bluish green leaves with lax blades and stems that lean toward the ground. The only other tufted grass co-occurring with *P. unilateralis* in WA is *Festuca rubra*, which has yellowish green leaves, erect blades, and stiffly erect stems. *P. unilateralis* var. *unilateralis* is not known from WA; it has flat or folded blades, and hairless lemmas or keels that are short-hairy for less than 1/5 their length.

**Range:** Lincoln Co., OR, and Pacific Co., WA.

**Habitat/Ecology:** In WA this coastal plant is known only from rock crevices and small ledges on steep basalt sea cliffs. In OR it occurs in a variety of topographic situations, including bluffs, sand dunes, and open grassy slopes. Elevations in WA: 3-30 m (10-100 ft). Associated species include broadleaf stonecrop (*Sedum spathulifolium*) and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*).



photo by Debra Salstrom

**Comments:** In WA this taxon is known only from a series of bluffs along approximately 5 km (3 mi.) of coastline. Threats include competition with other plants, and in some locations, recreational rock climbing. This taxon is also rare in OR.

**References:** Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 24; Hickman 1993.



photo by Debra Salstrom