

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Acaciella angustissima – FERN ACACIA, PRAIRIE ACACIA, WHITE-BALL ACACIA [Fabaceae]

Acaciella angustissima (Miller) Britt. & Rose, FERN ACACIA, PRAIRIE ACACIA, WHITE-BALL ACACIA. Perennial herb to subshrub, not spinescent, clonal, rhizomatous from creeping, shallow and horizontal rhizomes, 1-stemmed from each rhizome segment, ascending, to 80 cm tall; shoots with finely compound leaves that are sensitive to touch, short-hairy; rhizomes ca. 3 mm diameter, with \pm lobed pith, scales on rhizome \pm triangular with blunt tip, 4–5 mm long; adventitious roots from rhizome nodes on lower side. **Stems:** low-ridged, with 3 ridges descending from leaf, internodes < 10–35 mm long, tough, pilose-hirsute with radiating hairs. **Leaves:** helically alternate, even-2-pinnately compound with 6–9 pairs of lateral primary leaflets and 15–25 pairs of secondary leaflets, petiolate with pulvinus, with stipules; stipules 2, attached at base of petiole, linear, to 3 mm long, green aging purplish, ciliate on margins; petiole to 25 mm long, pulvinus 1 mm long, shallowly channeled above pulvinus, lacking secretory glands; rachis 2-channeled with central ridge, with pairs of primary leaflets 3–4 mm apart; primary leaflets 6–23 mm long, with pulvinus at base 1 mm long and with an inconspicuous stipel 0.4 mm long on upper side touching top of pulvinus, axis with short hairs; secondary leaflets with petiolule < 0.2 mm long, blades asymmetrically narrowly ovate, < 1.5–2.3 \times 0.5–0.8 mm, oblique at base, entire and appressed short-ciliate on margins, obtuse at tip, 1-veined. **Inflorescence:** headlike raceme, axillary, 12–13 mm across, < 24-flowered, flowers alternate, bracteate; peduncle slender, 15–25 mm long, with pulvinus ca. 1.5 mm long, pilose; bractlet subtending pedicel, < 0.5 mm long; pedicel \pm spreading, < 1–2 \times 0.25 mm, pale yellow-green. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 4.5–5 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, cupped-shaped, \pm 0.8 mm long, not appressed to corolla; tube short-hairy to midpoint, alternating green and whitish; lobes broad and rounded, ca. 0.25 \times 0.5 mm, membranous with green vein not reaching tip; **corolla** 5-lobed, obconic; tube cup-shaped, at anthesis to 1 mm long and wide, green; lobes oblong-elliptic, to 1.6 \times 0.7 mm, green with narrow white margins, with inconspicuous vein, acute at tip; **stamens** > 100, free; filaments exerted, slender, threadlike, \pm 4 mm long, white; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, minute, pale yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1, exerted, \pm 5 mm long; ovary superior, narrowly ellipsoid, 1.5 \times 0.4 mm, glossy green, 1-chambered with ca. 10 ovules attached to upper side; style often bent with stigma at or below level of anthers, ca. 3 mm long, white; stigma terminal, minute, glabrous. **Fruit:** pod (legume), stalked (stipe) at base to 4 mm long, dehiscent, 2-valved, to 5-seeded, oblong and flat bulging at seeds, 36–50 \times 7–10 mm, brown, surfaces veiny, glabrate or pilose, with curved beak at tip; pedicel in fruit ca. 1 mm long. Seed: broadly elliptic to obovate in outline and compressed side-to-side, 4.3–6.2 \times 3.4–5.2 \times 1.8–3.2 mm, mottled dull brown and light brown, with oblique hilum.

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