

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Bacopa monnieri – WATER HYSSOP [Plantaginaceae/Scrophulariaceae]

Bacopa monnieri (L.) Wettst., WATER HYSSOP. Perennial herb, clonal, fibrous-rooted, ± mat-forming with prostrate stems rooting at nodes on lower side of stem, ascending shoots to 12 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, glabrous. **Stems:** cylindrical, to 2 mm diameter, yellow-green, leaf bases not decurrent. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, subsessile with pair fused across nodes forming short sheath, without stipules; petiole to 1 mm long, broad and flattened, indistinct from blade; blade broadly elliptic to obovate, (2–)3.3–8.5 × 2.2–5 mm, somewhat glossy, tapered at base, entire, rounded to obtuse at tip, with only midrib visible and slightly sunken on upper surface. **Inflorescence:** leafy raceme (axillary flowers), with 1 flower or a pair of stalked flowers at each node; bractlets subtending pedicel lacking; pedicel cylindrical, 7–17+ mm long, at top with 2 bracteoles at top, narrowly triangular somewhat keeled, at anthesis 2.5–3 mm increasing to 4–5 × 1 mm in fruit, light green, entire, glabrous. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, in range 7–9 mm across; **sepals** 5 in 2 series, unequal, green, outer 3 sepals whorled and fused at base, 2 broadly ovate, 6.5–7 × 3.5–4.5 mm and 1 narrower with membranous inner margin, inner 2 sepals on lower side of flower, ca. 5–6 × 1.5 mm, strongly keeled and minutely ciliate on wide membranous margins, later appressed to fruit edges; **corolla** indistinctly 2-lipped, 9–10 mm long, pale pink or light pink to light pinkish purple; tube + throat ± funnel-shaped, tube inside glossy yellow and throat pale pinkish purple and satiny pink, ca. 10-ribbed, outer side with shallow groove on floor; upper lip 2-lobed and lower lip 3-lobed; lobes subequal, ± fan-shaped to obovate, ca. 4 × 2.5–3.5 mm, pink with 5 diverging veins; **stamens** 4, of 2 lengths, attached 1 mm from base of corolla tube with shorter 2 on lower side; filaments curved below anther to display anther inward, 1.5 mm and 2–2.5 mm long, white; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 1.2–1.5 mm long, purple, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen white; **nectary disc** below ovary, cuplike, green; **pistil** 1, 5.5–6 mm long; ovary superior, ovoid compressed front-to-back, 2.1–2.4 × 1.5–1.7 mm, green, glabrous, 2-chambered, each chamber with many ovules; style straight, ca. 3 × 0.3 mm, pale green; stigma at same level as anthers, capitate, dark green. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, 2-valved, many-seeded, ascending to spreading on long pedicel, ovoid compressed front-to-back and slightly bulging from seeds, 5–7 × 3.5–4.5 mm, light brown with dark brown septum pitted by where seeds were embedded; pedicel to 18 mm long. **Seed:** oblong, ± 0.25–0.3 × 0.1 mm, mostly colorless but with a fine red network of low ridges defining cells in longitudinal files.

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