

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Cerastium glomeratum – STICKY MOUSE-EAR CHICKWEED [Caryophyllaceae]

Cerastium glomeratum Thuill., STICKY MOUSE-EAR CHICKWEED. Annual, taprooted, typically 1–several-stemmed at base, ascending to spreading, in range (5–)10–25 cm tall; shoots ± pilose with erect multicellular hairs and some capitate glandular hairs (mostly in flowering canopy). **Stems:** cylindric, 1 mm diameter, green becoming flesh-colored or deep purplish red, internodes in range < 40 mm long, the shortest at plant base. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, sessile with pair connected by 2 low ledges across node, without stipules; blade oblanceolate or obovate to elliptic or ovate, in range 12–27 × 3.5–12 mm, dull, broadly to narrowly tapered at base, entire and ciliate on margins, acute to rounded or obtuse at tip, sometimes sheathing stem for 0.5–1 mm, appearing faintly parallel-veined at base with midrib raised on lower surface, pilose. **Inflorescence:** dichasial cyme, terminal or occasionally axillary, open or compact when young, 20–140 × 30–110 mm, equally 2-forked at each node, several–many-flowered, bracteate; bracts subtending each fork 2, leaflike but reduced upward (never scarious); bractlets subtending pedicels absent; pedicel typically 1–2.5 mm long, pilose and capitate-glandular. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 8–10 mm across; hypanthium inconspicuous; **sepals** 5, lanceolate, at anthesis 3.1–3.5 × 0.8–1.1 mm increasing to 4–5 mm long in fruit, green and colorless-scarious on exposed margins, acute at tip, with fine venation, glandular-hairy, pilose at tip with hairs > (sometimes with a purple line or dot approaching tip); **petals** 5, 2-lobed oblanceolate, ± 4 mm long > length of sepals, white; **stamens** 10, free; filaments erect, slender, 1.3–1.5 mm long, whitish translucent; anthers basifixed, minutely dithecal, < 0.2 mm long, pale yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, ovoid to oblong, ca. 1.2 × 0.8 mm, glabrous, light green, 1-chambered with ca. 25 ovules attached to central post; styles 5, ascending, 0.7 mm long, colorless, pubescent above midpoint (= stigmatic region). **Fruit:** capsule, dehiscent by 10 teethlike valves at tip, 15–25-seeded, cylindric and mostly straight, 6.5–7.5 × 1.2–1.9 mm, glabrous, whitish translucent but greenish at base; teeth acuminate, with outwardly folding margins. **Seed:** triangular-ovoid compressed side-to-side, ca. 0.5 × 0.4 × 0.2 mm, light brown to pale reddish brown, glabrous, with short, hard projections or minutely warty.

A. C. Gibson & B. A. Prigge