

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Chamaesaracha coniodes – GROUND SARACHA, PROSTRATE GROUNDCHERRY [Solanaceae]

Chamaesaracha coniodes (Dunal) A. Gray, GROUND SARACHA, PROSTRATE GROUNDCHERRY. Perennial herb, with woody rootstock, not rosetted, several-stemmed at base, decumbent to spreading or ascending, in range < 20 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, in range < 25 cm tall, shoots densely glandular-pubescent, having fine-stalked glandular hairs (resembling short-pilose), thicker short hairs unbranched or forked resembling nonglandular hairs but in fresh condition with glandular hairs, and occasionally nonglandular heads (often > 1 mm long) with a bulbous base. **Stems:** ridged, < 2 mm diameter, with 2 conspicuous ridges descending from each leaf, tough (slightly woody at base), green with a white stripe on each internode, mostly glandular-hairy, heads aging reddish. **Leaves:** alternate or opposite but not decussate, pinnately lobed with < 7 lobes on each margin, subsessile, without stipules; petiole ± hemispheric, to 2 mm long but indistinct from blade; blade broadly lanceolate or narrowly ovate to broadly oblanceolate, in range to 35 × 13 mm, long-tapered at base, often wavy and principal lobes mostly 3–6 mm long on margins, the lobes sometimes with sublobes or adjacent teeth obtuse to rounded at tip, pinnately veined with midrib slightly raised but principal veins slightly sunken on upper surface and principal veins raised on lower surface, terminal lobe ovate to mitten-shaped. **Inflorescence:** solitary, axillary, formed at fork or junction of a pair of leaves, and the continuing shoot, flower initially horizontally oriented on ascending pedicel, lacking bracts, pubescent like shoot; pedicel straight and slender, at anthesis 17–26 × 0.7–0.8 mm increasing in fruit, pale green drying tannish with conspicuous, radiating, stalked glandular hairs but very few nonglandular hairs with bulbous bases. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, in range 13–15 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, in range 3.2–4 mm long, light green, with mixed piloselike glandular hairs and thicker, unbranched and 2-forked glandular hairs; tube 0.5–1.2 mm long; lobes widely spreading, obtuse-ovate, 2.5–3 × 1.3–1.5 mm, appearing nonglandular-ciliate on margins, inner (upper) surface sparsely short-strigose above midpoint; **corolla** shallowly 5-lobed, rotate, 7–8 mm long; tube ringlike, short, white; throat broadly spreading with broadly acute tips of lobes, at anthesis with a centered white star in center and pale light yellow outward, on upper surface star densely tomentose with white nonglandular hairs, above star points a zone with glandular hairs and aging greenish, outward pale light yellow surface glabrous, margin short-ciliate with unbranched and 2-forked glandular hairs and on opposite, lower surface with stalked glandular hairs and thicker hairs along raised midvein at approaching tip; **stamens** 5, attached at base of corolla; filaments subequal (unequal in bud), cylindrical, 3.2–3.7 mm long, white, slender at top, with sparse, minute glandular hairs; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 1.3–2 mm long, pale light yellow, with scattered, short nonglandular hairs, longitudinally dehiscent; **nectary chamber** beneath ovary and appearing at least halfway up ovary, light yellow-orange; **pistil** 1, 7–7.5 mm long; ovary superior, broadly conic, ca. 1.5 × 2 mm, exposed portion white and glabrous, roundish at top, 2-chambered, each chamber with 10+ ovules; style cylindrical curved above midpoint, 5.5–6 mm long, white; stigma terminal, saddlebag-shaped, light green. **Fruit:** berry, ca. 8-seeded, subspheroid, ca. 4 mm, tannish, leathery, pulp loose, whitish; persistent calyx with triangular lobes leaning over top of fruit. **Seed:** D-shaped, 2–2.3 × 1.4–1.8 × 1 mm, dark brown, having pitted surface from collapsed outer walls of cells, hilum eccentric pushed to 1 side.

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