

**Vascular Plants of Williamson County**  
*Cheilanthes horridula* – PRICKLY LIP FERN [Pteridaceae]

*Cheilanthes horridula* Maxon, PRICKLY LIP FERN. Perennial herb, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, rosetted, with ascending leaves, in range < 15 cm tall; shoot with only basal leaves, foliage monomorphic, initially sterile later forming sporangia on lower surface, pubescent, especially short-hirsute, lacking glandular hairs; emerging leaves hooked at growing tips (not coiled, i.e., vernation not circinnate); rhizome compact to short-creeping, 4–7 mm diameter, densely covered with scales, scales persistent, the common form loosely appressed, long-acuminate or more slender and difficult to distinguish from hairs, mostly 1.5–3 × 0.1–0.4 mm, initially colorless aging first with brown cell outlines and then uniformly brown, lacking darker central stripe, with several minute teeth on margins below midpoint. **Leaves (fronds):** helically alternate, odd-2-pinnately compound, with 6–10 primary leaflets per side in subopposite pairs below midblade, petiolate; petiole (stipe) cylindrical, to 60 mm long, brittle, initially glossy dark red-purple aging black, initially with persistent scales mixed with shorter hairs; blade ± oblong, in range 35–120 × 15–30 mm, lateral primary leaflets ⊥ to rachis, terminal lobe triangular and ca. 5 mm long with a couple short sublobes; rachis cylindrical, glossy dark red-purple aging black, lateral primary leaflets spaced < 15 mm apart, with hairs and persistent scales; petiolule ca. 1 mm long, glossy dark red-purple aging black; lateral primary leaflets ± triangular in outline, in range to 12 × 7 mm, mostly with 6–9 secondary leaflets alternate along rachilla; rachilla shallowly channeled, green or red-purple next to petiolule; secondary leaflets, sessile to subsessile, obtuse-ovate with margins inrolled (revolute) to under side (rounded at tip), mostly 3–4 × 2.5 mm, veins inconspicuous, upper surface with scattered, ascending short-hirsute hairs having thickened base, lower surface with longer hairs and lacking scales. **Sori:** submarginal on lower surface, appearing continuous except at tip, each secondary leaflet with many sporangia in ± 2 rows partially concealed by down-curved, nongreen, minutely crenate lobes of leaf margin (false indusium), each tooth with a short hair. **Sporangia:** spheroid, ca. 0.25 mm, red and translucent aging with darker spores, the dehiscence mechanism (annulus) ringlike, each sporangium with 64 spores.

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