

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Cuscuta campestris – FIELD DODDER [Convolvulaceae]

Cuscuta campestris Yunck., FIELD DODDER. Annual parasitic vine, twining, flexible-stemmed, attached to host stem by haustoria; shoots essentially leafless, orangish (lacking chlorophyll), glabrous. **Stems:** threadlike and cylindric, 0.5–1.3 mm diameter, fleshy, initially pale yellow-green turning orange, smooth but becoming knobby where haustoria initiate. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, sessile, without stipules; blade appressed, awl-shaped, 1–2 × 0.5–1 mm, acute at tip, short-lived and early abscised. **Inflorescence:** headlike axillary cluster of 1–several condensed cymes, each cyme 1–5-flowered, bracteate, glabrous; bractlet subtending pedicel ovate, 1–2 mm long, greenish with whitish margins; pedicel ± 1.5 mm long, to 2 mm wide at base of flower, narrower below; bracteoles minute. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 2.3–2.7 mm across, in range 2.3–3.5 mm long; **calyx** (4–)5-lobed, cup-shaped, surface minutely bladderlike (vesicular); tube ± 1.2 mm long, greenish at base; lobes overlapping, ovate-triangular, 0.6–1 × 1.2–1.5 mm, ± transparent, rounded at tip; **corolla** (4–)5-lobed, white; tube shallowly bell-shaped, in range 1.2–1.5 mm long; lobes triangular to acuminate, 1.1–1.7 × 1.1–1.5 mm, minutely vesicular, with (4–)5 appendages opposite bases of stamens, the appendages tongue-shaped, 1.5–1.8 mm long, white-translucent, with lobes on margins, the lobes to ca. 9 per side, simple but occasionally forked, to 0.5 mm long; **stamens** (4–)5, fused to end of tube alternate with corolla lobes; filaments 0.7 mm long; anthers slightly exserted, basifixed, dithecal, broadly elliptic, ± 0.5 mm long, yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **nectary disc** beneath ovary, ringlike; **pistil** 1, ca. 2 mm long; ovary superior, spheric but depressed at top, 2-chambered, each chamber with 2 green ovules; styles 2, arising from within depression, of 2 lengths, in range 0.6–1 mm long for each flower, white; stigmas positioned ± at height of anthers, capitate, light greenish yellow. **Fruit:** berrylike capsule, in range 1–3-seeded, spheric to inversely pear-shaped, ± 3.8 × 3.6 mm, faintly 4-lobed in ×-section. **Seed:** ovoid, 2.5–2.6 mm long, with 1 or 2 flat areas on broader half of inward-facing side.

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