

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Cuscuta indecora var. *indecora* – SHOWY DODDER, PRETTY DODDER, LARGE-SEED DODDER, LARGE ALFALFA DODDER [Convolvulaceae/Cuscutaceae]

Cuscuta indecora Choisy var. *indecora*, SHOWY DODDER, PRETTY DODDER, LARGE-SEED DODDER, LARGE ALFALFA DODDER. Annual parasitic vine, flexible-stemmed, attached to host stem and other organs by haustoria; shoots essentially leafless, light orange (lacking chlorophyll), glabrous. **Stems:** threadlike and cylindric, 0.2–0.5 mm diameter, fleshy, light orange, smooth; the thickest where haustoria initiate. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, sessile, without stipules; blade infrequent, cupped awl-shaped, 1.1–1.4 mm long, transparent light orange. **Inflorescence:** cyme, axillary, several-flowered, bracteate, glabrous; bract = leaf subtending pedicel at top of peduncle; pedicel cylindric, to 4 mm long, orangish but white at base of flower, minutely bumpy with strongly domed cells (“papillate”). **Flower:** bisexual, radial, ± 2.5 mm across; receptacle flat but fleshy on lower side; **calyx** 5-lobed, ca. 2 mm long, colorless, thick, and watery; tube short bell-shaped, 1–1.2 mm long, with 5 furrows descending from sinuses, papillate; lobes cupped-ovate, $0.8\text{--}1 \times 1.1\text{--}1.3$ mm, slightly overlapping and bending inward covering top of flower (inflexed tip); **corolla** 5-lobed, 2 mm long, white, not fleshy; tube short, not papillate; throat cup-shaped, papillate on outer surface, inner surface with 5 appendages opposite bases of stamens (infrastaminal scales), the appendages arising from top of corolla tube, tongue-shaped, ca. 0.8 mm long including conspicuous hairlike fringes on margins base-to-top; lobes \pm deltate, ca. 0.6×0.8 mm, with inflexed tips, papillate on outer surface; **stamens** 5, attached just above corolla appendages; filaments erect, stout tapered base-to-tip, ± 0.7 mm long, white, not papillate; anthers slightly exerted, basifixed, dithecal, 0.4×0.5 mm, orange-yellow (golden yellow), longitudinally dehiscent; pollen orange-yellow; **nectary disc** covering lower portion of ovary, flat ring, 0.35 mm long, glossy green, \pm smooth (not papillate); **pistil** 1; ovary superior, upper portion wheel-like, 0.45×1 mm, light green, papillate above midpoint, 2-chambered, each chamber with 2 ovules; styles 2, rising from with depression, erect to suberect, subequal, cylindric, 0.6–0.75 mm long, white + stigmas, stigma capitate, 0.35–0.4 mm wide, length $<$ width, light orange. **Fruit:** berrylike capsule becoming papery-walled, opening at top and rupturing irregularly, 2–4-seeded, subspheroid, ca. 2.5 mm. **Seed:** ovoid, 1.6–1.8 mm long, with 1 or 2 flat areas on broader half of inward-facing side.

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