

## Vascular Plants of Williamson County

*Cyperus acuminatus* – TAPERTIP FLATSEEDGE, SHORTPOINT FLATSEEDGE [Cyperaceae]

*Cyperus acuminatus* Torrey & Hooker, TAPERTIP FLATSEEDGE, SHORTPOINT FLATSEEDGE. Perennial herb, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, scapose, not rosetted, several-stemmed at base of each plantlet and many-stemmed arising from elongated rhizome, with suberect to erect inflorescences in range 15–38 cm tall; shoots with only basal leaves, foliage of ascending to spreading, V-folded blades, glabrous; rhizomes creeping, to 6 mm diameter, white, the scales closed, < 4 mm long, colorless or occasionally with purple-red veins. **Stems (culms):** = peduncle above attachment of basal leaves, to 1.5 mm diameter, where exposed 3-angled and 3-sided (trigonous) rounded on angles and ca. 15-ridged, in range to 240 mm long, tough, green, not scabrous. **Leaves:** alternate tristichous, simple with sheath or with only sheath (e.g., leaves 1 and 2); sheath closed, ca. 10 mm long increasing upward to 25–40 mm long, purple-red parallel veins not observed, of the first leaves acute; ligule absent; blades linear increasing upward, in range to 140 × 2.5 mm, the widest at base long-tapered to tip, entire, parallel-veined, surfaces nearly smooth. **Inflorescence:** spikelets, 150+ in a condensed umbel-like array having clusters of radiating spikelets at ends of primary branches (primary rays), terminal on scape, outline of inflorescence mostly with ascending primary rays < 10 mm long and mostly 18–30 × 13–22 mm, more open inflorescence having primary rays to 30 mm long, primary rays 5–8, at top of primary ray having a hemispheroid cluster with 25+ spikelets, bracteate, glabrous; each primary ray subtended by an ascending, leaflike inflorescence bract (terminal spikelet cluster bractless) + a sheathing “bract” (prophyll), inflorescence bracts subtending alternate and somewhat tristichous along rachis, ascending, leaflike but sheathless and fused to 2 faces of stem, mostly 3 >> spikelets, blade V-folded, linear to acuminate, the lowest to 140 × 2 mm, successively shorter and narrower from base to tip of array, of the youngest primary rays and bracts of spikelets to < 2 mm long and acuminate; prophyll sheath closed 3/4 length, to 5 mm long at the first node, decreasing upward, papery; pulvinus at bases of primary rays absent. **Spikelet:** to 35-flowered, oblong and strongly 2-dimensional (plagiotropic), elongating to 11 × 2.2–2.7 × 1 mm but florets with mature fruits abscising from base upward so intact portion shorter, florets alternate distichous, sessile, bisexual, bracteate, glabrous; glumes (bracts subtending spikelet) 2, distichous, lower glume < 0.5 mm long, upper glume > 1 mm long; rachilla with spikelets spaced 0.6 mm apart on each side, flattened, greenish, persistent and red-brown with orangish midvein after florets abscised; bractlets (floral scales) overlapping, bractlet subtending flower sheathing and cupped around flower, in range 1–1.5 mm long, green and yellow-green with colorless wide margins, acute at tip often slightly curved outward, closely 2-keeled at very narrow base with each keel descending along sides to margins approaching tip, in fruit back shallowly sinusoid (S-shaped). **Flower:** bisexual, < 0.5 mm across; **perianth** absent; **stamens** 1, free; filament threadlike, 1.6 mm long, white; anther in range 0.5–0.6 mm long, reddish; **pistil** 1, with minute stalk (stipe) 0.1 mm long; ovary superior, equally 3-sided and slightly obovoid, 0.3–0.5 mm long, greenish, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; style ca. 1.3 mm long, translucent, 3-branched above midpoint, the stigmatic branch tips exerted, threadlike, to 0.5 mm long. **Fruit:** achene, abscised wrapped by bractlet, short-stalked, the stalk ca. 0.1 mm long; achene obovoid 3-sided and 3-angled, 0.8–0.9 × 0.3–0.4 mm, red-brown or rose-

red to brown appearing somewhat metallic, rounded on edges, faces minutely textured;  
bractlet drying pale brown often entrapping achene + style.

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