

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Diaperia verna var. *verna* – SPRING RABBIT-TOBACCO, MANY-STEM RABBIT-TOBACCO
[Asteraceae]

Diaperia verna (Raf.) Morefield var. *verna*, SPRING RABBIT-TOBACCO, MANY-STEM RABBIT-TOBACCO. Annual, taprooted, several–many-stemmed at base, with ascending branches, in range 2–18 cm tall; shoots leafy throughout, with densely white-woolly stems and inflorescence arrays, hairs less dense on foliage, not glandular, not aromatic. **Stems:** cylindrical, to 1.5 mm diameter at base, tough, internodes to 5 mm long, without ridges decurrent from blades, glossy green beneath dense wool having long hairs oriented longitudinally. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, sessile, without stipules; blade oblong to oblanceolate, < 6–17 × 2–4.5 mm, slightly clasping at base, entire and often wavy on margins, broadly acute to obtuse at tip, only midrib visible raised on lower surface, cobwebby-woolly and surfaces equally hairy light green. **Inflorescence:** heads, terminal, solitary or several(–10+) in compact, hemispheric mound to 8 mm across, hidden by thick wool (lanuginous) until flowering heads become partially exerted to 2 mm, central flowers appearing as pits in the wool and in fruit styles slightly elevated above wool, head disciform, 2.5–3 mm across, with 13+ pistillate peripheral flowers lacking pappus (epappose), 3–4(–5) functionally staminate central flowers, sessile, subtended by bracts (capitular leaves), bracteate, densely white-woolly; capitular leaves like cauline leaves, mostly curved over array and often somewhat inrolled to the lower side, typically not exceeding height of exerted heads; **involucre** hidden in thick wool, phyllaries 4–6, subequal, membranous aging scarious, elliptic, ca. 2 × 1 mm, colorless or with green along midline, entire, rounded or shallowly notched at tip, with some long, loosely intertwined and crooked woolly hairs arising on green tissue above midpoint; receptacle subspheroid, having bractlets (paleae) subtending all flowers, never folded or keeled; paleae of pistillate peripheral flowers resembling phyllaries, ± erect, elliptic to narrowly obovate, ca. 2 mm long, slightly to strongly cupped behind pistillate flower, woolly above midpoint; paleae of staminate central flowers ascending to spreading, narrowly obovate-spatulate, slightly > pistillate paleae, with greater green area with greater wool and more narrow membranous margins. **Pistillate flower:** radial, 0.2 mm across; **calyx (pappus)** absent; **corolla** minutely 4-toothed, tubular, ca. 1.5 × 0.1 mm, mostly whitish but tinged purplish red at top, each tooth with stalked glands; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1, ± 2 mm long; ovary inferior, narrowly ellipsoid and straight, 0.5–0.6 × 0.2 mm, white, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; style exerted, threadlike, ca. 2 mm long, 2-branched, the branches spreading and arching, ca. 0.3 mm long, white, stigmatic with tips aging reddish. **Staminate flower:** radial, appearing bisexual, ca. 0.25 mm across; **calyx (pappus)** absent; **corolla** minutely 4-lobed, tubular gradually expanding, ± 1.5 mm long, white, tube < 0.5 mm long and indistinct from throat; throat with somewhat flat sides, upper portion expanded around anthers; lobes acute, ca. 0.2 mm long, tinged reddish at tips; **stamens** 4, fused to corolla tube ca. 0.5 mm above base; filaments white, 0.5–0.6 mm long; anthers fused into cylinder surrounding style, basifixed, dithecal, ± 0.5 mm long, golden yellow, with short tails at base and sterile appendage at tip, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen golden yellow; **pistil** 1, included, ca. 1.7 mm long; ovary inferior, wedge-shaped and 4-sided, ca. 0.4 mm long, greenish, presumably 1-chambered but without ovule; style 1.2–1.4 mm long, white to midpoint and

golden yellow to tip, with swelling at base. **Fruits:** cypselae (achenes) of only pistillate flowers, without pappus, narrowly obovoid (ellipsoid), 0.7–0.9 × 0.3 mm, white aging light brown, beaded with raised cells in vertical lines; with persistent corolla and style.

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