

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Eleocharis xyridiformis – PALE SPIKERUSH

Eleocharis xyridiformis Fern. & Brack. (s.s.), PALE SPIKERUSH. Aquatic perennial herb, clonal, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, not rosetted, tufted, mat-forming with erect individual shoots, in range to 35 cm tall; shoots typically with 1 basal leaf, glabrous, light green; rhizomes shallow, condensed, cylindric, ca. 1.5 mm diameter, internodes cylindric, mostly 0.4–0.7 mm long, white with translucent core, cataphylls sheathing, acute, 6–7 mm long, colorless tissue with closely spaced purple-red veins; adventitious roots at nodes of rhizome. **Stems:** compressed and elliptic in \times -section, mostly 1.5–1.8 mm diameter, light green above leaf, smooth. **Leaves:** alternate = sheath, closed tightly appressed to lower stem, 40–55 mm long, subtruncate at tip with a short subterminal tip (blade) acute, < 1 mm long, parallel veins green and tissue colorless above midpoint and often rose-red below midpoint, rim at top sometimes minutely red-dotted. **Inflorescence:** spikelike (“spikelet”), terminal, narrowly lanceoloid-linear acuminate at tip, 7–20 \times 1–1.5 mm, many-flowered, flowers helically alternate wotj 2/5 phyllotaxis and overlapping and tightly appressed, bracteate, glabrous; peduncle (stem) compressed; bracts subtending spike typically 2, alternate distichous, sheathing, obtuse-ovate, ca. 2 mm long, mostly crimson with membranous margins and tip, midvein not distinctive; bractlet acute-ovate, 2.5–3 \times 2 mm, mostly purple-red with raised yellowish midvein and a conspicuous membranous margin becoming scarious and especially wide at tip, midvein not reaching membranous tip. **Flower:** bisexual, \pm radial, conspicuously exserted from bractlet; **perianth** = bristles typically 3, to 1.5 mm long; **stamens** 3, free, exserted from bractlet; filaments threadlike, 2–3 mm long, yellowish; anthers basifixed, dithecal, fully exserted, 1.5–1.8 mm long, pale yellow with slender translucent tip, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1, 3–4 mm long; ovary superior, biconvex and flattish, ca. 0.7 mm long, greenish, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; style ascending with tips exserted from bractlet, at base swollen to form a tubercle, the tubercle wide-conic, at anthesis ca. 0.35 mm wide and constricted at base, style below fork ca. 1 mm long and 2-branched above, the branches arching, nearly fully exserted, translucent, papillate along entire length. **Fruit:** achene with the persistent style tubercle, 1-seeded, fruit body obovoid biconvex, ca. 1.2 \times 1.2 mm, tubercle wide-conic, brown.

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