

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Eragrostis reptans – CREEPING LOVEGRASS [Poaceae]

Eragrostis reptans (Michx.) Nees, CREEPING LOVEGRASS. Annual, clonal, mat-forming, fibrous-rooted; dioecious; shoots with 2-ranked cauline leaves, at each node having a axillary shoot; adventitious roots at nodes. **Stems:** cylindric, to 1.5 mm diameter, tough, swollen at nodes, internodes to $53 \times 1-3$ mm, mostly glabrous; essentially solid. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sessile; prophyll triangular in outline, ca. 4 mm long, 2-keeled and strongly folded along keels, membranous, margins to 0.5 mm wide, short-ciliate along keels; sheath open, ridged, with membranous margins, glabrous or with several pilose hairs on midvein on back and subtending and adjacent to ligule; ligule with short membranous base and short-ciliate on margin, < 0.5 mm long; collar white, pilose-ciliate, with pilose hairs on both surfaces; blade linear folded upward from midrib, in range $5-25 \times 1-2$ mm, the widest at base, minutely toothed on margins, blunt at tip, parallel-veined, smooth and finely striped, glabrous. **Inflorescences:** spikelets, unisexual, in spikes, with dense cluster of spikes terminal on lateral shoots, bracteate, lacking awns, lacking glands. **Staminate inflorescence:** spike linear strongly compressed, $< 10-34 \times 1.8-4$ mm, to 60 alternate distichous florets, typically straight; **glumes** 2, unequal, lower glume in range $1-1.2$ mm long, 1-veined, not scabrous, upper glume ± 2 mm long, keeled, 1-veined, scabrous above midpoint; **lemma** keeled, $2.7-3$ mm long, 3-veined with veins not converging at tip, keel scabrous approaching tip; **palea** 2-keeled, ca. 2 mm long, folded along keels, green, short-ciliate. **Staminate flower: perianth (lodicules)** 2, narrowly fan-shaped, $0.3-0.35$ mm long; **stamens** 3, free; filaments threadlike, $2-3$ mm long, white; anthers exerted above midpoint of lemma, dorsifixed, dithecal, ± 1.6 mm long, cream-colored with rose at tip, longitudinally dehiscent; **pistil** absent. **Pistillate inflorescence:** panicle of spikes, spikes ovate in outline strongly compressed, to 12×3 mm, having to 25 alternate distichous florets, often strongly curved to flat side, peduncle to 4 mm long; spikelets breaking below each fertile floret; **glumes** 2, unequal, 1-veined, lower glume ca. 0.7 mm long, upper glume keeled, 1.4 mm long, keel not scabrous, deciduous; **lemma** $>$ glume, 3-veined but lateral veins not reaching tip, keel scabrous above midpoint, deciduous; **palea** 2-keeled, ± 1.5 mm long, $<$ lemma, folded along keels, veins green, short-ciliate along keels, persistent. **Pistillate flower: perianth (lodicules)** 2, narrowly fan-shaped, $0.3-0.35$ mm long; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1, 3 mm long; ovary superior, broadly ellipsoid compressed side-to-side, $0.3-0.35$ mm long, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; style exerted from lemma, white, deeply 2-branched (fused at base), the branches threadlike, exerted portion bottlebrushlike. **Fruit:** achene (caryopsis) ovoid flattened side-to-side, ca. 0.9×0.4 mm, pale brown reddish near base, with beak (base of style) at tip to 0.3 mm long.

A. C. Gibson