

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Erigeron canadensis – HORSEWEED [Asteraceae]

Erigeron canadensis L. (syn. *Conyza canadensis*), HORSEWEED. Annual, taprooted, rosetted, 1–several-stemmed at base, unbranched or with a cluster of principal axes unbranched below inflorescence, erect (to ascending), in range 20–100+ cm tall; shoots with basal leaves and cauline leaves, leafy throughout, above midplant often with tufts of leaves from unexpanded axillary shoots, sparsely stiff-strigose to hirsute. **Stems:** cylindric, to 10 mm diameter, with 3 veins descending from each leaf but scarcely raised, greenish striped with yellow-green to tannish white or orangey tan veins. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, sessile and indistinctly petiolate (rosette and lower cauline leaves), without stipules; petiole to 7 mm long, weakly differentiated from tapered leaf base; blade linear to oblanceolate-linear, 7–70 × 1–6 mm, tapered at base, entire to remotely serrate on 1 margin + stiff-strigose to coarsely ciliate on other margin, pinnately veined with midrib raised on lower surface, strigose especially along principal veins. **Inflorescence:** heads, in terminal, open, paniclelike arrays, array sometimes with lower branches overtopping main axis, 120–500+ × 40–260 mm, several–many branched from rachis, head obscurely radiate, ca. 3 mm across, in range with 24–40 pistillate peripheral flowers in 2+ series and ca. 10–15 bisexual disc flowers, bracteate, sparsely hairy; bract subtending lateral branch leaflike, 10–40 mm long; lateral branches producing ascending cymelike clusters of several–many heads; bract subtending peduncle, decreasing upward; peduncle 1–15 mm long, often low-ridged, strigose, with 1–several linear-lanceolate bracts (= bracts subtending future peduncles); **involucre** bell-shaped, 2.7–4 × ± 2.5 mm becoming wider in fruit, phyllaries 23–30, unequal and graduated in 3–4 series, linear, 0.7–3.5 × 0.25–0.4 mm, the shortest in outer series, green with translucent midvein, white-membranous on margins, fringed at acute tip, glabrous or sparsely strigose along midvein, strongly reflexed in fruit; receptacle flat, 1–1.5 mm diameter, without bractlets (paleae), pitted with short teeth surrounding each ovary. **Peripheral flower:** pistillate, bilateral, < 0.2 mm across; **calyx (pappus)** of 19–22 capillary bristles in 1 whorl, fine, 2.2–2.5 mm long, tawny; **corolla** 2-lobed or acute at tip; tube cylindric, 2 mm long, light green, with a few hairs at tip; limb erect, slender, ca. 1 × 0.25 mm, white (sometimes at tip aging reddish) but greenish at base; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, oblanceoloid-ellipsoid compressed side-to-side, 1 mm long, finely short-hairy, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; style exserted, 2–2.5 mm long, white, 2-branched, the branches spreading. **Disc flower:** bisexual, radial, ± 0.4 mm across, 2.5–2.8 mm long; **calyx (pappus)** of 20–25(–29) capillary bristles in 1 whorl, 2.2–2.8 mm long, white; **corolla** (4–)5-lobed, 2.2–2.8 mm long; tube + throat cylindric, greenish white; lobes acute, 0.1–0.25 mm long, pale greenish yellow with greenish marginal vein; **stamens** (4–)5, fused to corolla at top of tube, included; filaments < 0.5 mm long; anthers fused into cylinder surrounding style, basifixed, dithecal, ± 0.7 mm long, pale yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, oblanceoloid-ellipsoid compressed side-to-side, 1 mm long, finely short-hairy, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; style 2–2.5 mm long, 2-branched, the branches exserted. **Fruits:** cypselae, monomorphic, with spheroidal array of pappus ca. 8 mm diameter, monomorphic; fruit body oblong to oblanceoloid, 1–1.3 mm long, pale tan

to light gray-brown, sparsely and finely sericeous on faces; pappus of 19–25(–29) whitish, ascending, fine capillary bristles, 2–2.7 mm long.

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