

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Erigeron strigosus – PRAIRIE FLEABANE [Asteraceae]

Erigeron strigosus Willd., PRAIRIE FLEABANE. Annual to biennial herb, in range mostly taprooted (caudex and fibrous-rooted), not rosetted, several-stemmed at base, in range to 50 cm tall; gynomonoecious; shoots with basal leaves (commonly present at flowering) and cauline leaves, strigose and short-strigose to short-hirsute, lacking glandular hairs. **Stems:** 5-sided and ridged, to 3 mm diameter, with 3 ridges descending from each leaf, green aging purple-red, strigose with upward-pointing hairs to 1 mm long and short-hirsute to hirsute or sparsely so. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate and sessile (petiole indistinct), without stipules; petiole of lower leaves slender and flattened top-to-bottom, to 25 mm long, indistinct from blade; blade of summer leaves obovate to oblanceolate or oblong, $12\text{--}35 \times 0.8\text{--}16\text{ mm}$, long-tapered at base, entire or on large blades occasionally 1–several teeth above midblade, acute at tip, 1-veined with midrib sometimes slightly raised on lower surface, often folded upward from midrib, strigose and short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs. **Inflorescence:** heads, terminal in open, cymelike arrays of several–many heads, head radiate, 11–13 mm across, of 30–40 pistillate ray flowers and many bisexual disc flowers, bracteate; peduncle cylindrical, to $50 \times 0.7\text{ mm}$, strigose and short-hirsute with ascending hairs, along peduncle and at top bract or bracts acuminate, 1–2 mm long, green, short-hirsute; **involucre** bell-shaped, $3.2\text{--}4 \times 3\text{--}5.5\text{ mm}$, short-hirsute, phyllaries 30+, outer series of 8 fleshy, 2–3 mm long, inner phyllaries 21+ in 2–3 series, oblong to oblanceolate, membranous with green center with hirsute hairs, fringed on acute tip; receptacle convex, lacking bractlets (paleae), with bumps around each ovary, glabrous. **Ray flower:** bilateral, <math>< 1\text{ mm}</math> across; **calyx (pappus)** in 1 whorl, of 15–20 stiff, slender, scarious, minute scales 0.15–0.4 mm long, inner whorl of bristles absent; **corolla** unlobed to minutely 1-notched; tube cylindrical, $1 \times 0.1\text{ mm}$, green, with minute and short hairs especially above midpoint around orifice; limb widely spreading, oblanceolate, $2.5\text{--}3.5 \times 0.2\text{--}0.7\text{ mm}$, white or blushed violet on outer (lower) surface, aging scarcely coiled; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, cylindrical, $0.7\text{--}0.8 \times 0.3\text{ mm}$, white with ascending short hairs, with a ring of appressed short hairs at base, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; **nectary disc** surrounding base of style, 0.25 mm long, white; style exerted, ca. 1.6 mm long, 2-branched, colorless below fork, the branches stigmatic, 0.6 mm long, white aging orangish then red. **Disc flower:** radial, ca. 0.5 mm across, ca. 3 mm long; **calyx (pappus)** in 2 whorls, outer whorl of 15–20 stiff, slender, scarious, minute scales, ascending, 0.15–0.4 mm long, inner whorl of (8–)11–15 erect capillary bristles 1.4–1.8 mm long, spreading in fruit; **corolla** 4–5-lobed, 1.8–2.7 mm long; tube ribbed, 0.4–0.65 mm long, expanded around nectary disc and constricted above that, greenish; throat cylindrical, $1\text{--}1.7 \times 0.4\text{--}0.5\text{ mm}$, 5-veined, colorless and veins green to yellowish, with minute hairs; lobes triangular (deltate), 0.4–0.45 mm, greenish with thickened green to dull yellow margins, fleshy, papillate on inner (upper) surface; **stamens** 5, attached to top of corolla tube, included; filaments threadlike, 0.5–0.8 mm, white; anthers fused into cylinder surrounding style, basifixed, dithecal, 0.7–1.2 mm long including acuminate appendages, sacs yellowish and appendages white, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellowish to light yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, \pm cylindrical, $0.7\text{--}0.8 \times 0.5\text{ mm}$, white with ascending short hairs, with a ring of appressed short hairs at base, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; **nectary disc**

surrounding base of style, 0.25 mm long, white; style included, 1.5–1.8 mm long, 2-branched at midpoint, colorless below fork, the branches stigmatic, yellowish. **Fruits:** cypselae (achenes) monomorphic with pappus differences; cypsela 2-ribbed narrowly obovoid, 0.8–1.3 × 0.5 mm, brownish, 3–4-veined, short-strigose and with short hairs at base; pappus of outer whorl of minute, slender scales and inner whorl of 8–15 spreading, fine bristles to 2 mm long (of disc flowers) or with only outer whorl (of ray flowers); receptacle with minute stalk persistent from each ovary; involucre phyllaries strongly reflexed in fruit.

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