**Vascular Plants of Williamson County**

*Erigeron tenuis* — SLENDER FLEABANE [Asteraceae]

*Erigeron tenuis* Torrey & A. Gray, SLENDER FLEABANE. Short-lived perennial (biennial), in range caudex and fibrous-rooted or also with taproot, rosetted, in early growth several-stemmed at base and later with many shoots arising from caudex, in range to 35 cm tall; gynomonoecious; shoots with basal leaves (mostly absent at flowering) and cauline leaves, conspicuously short-strigose with raised bases, lacking glandular hairs. **Stems:** 5-sided and ridged, to 2 mm diameter, with 3 ridges descending from each leaf, green, lower stem with ridges or also tissues aging purple-red, conspicuously short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, short-petiolute and sessile (petiole indistinct), without stipules; petiole of lower leaves slender and flattened top-to-bottom, indistinct from blade, of cauline leaves to 0.5 mm long, pale green; blade of early leaves obovate to oblanceolate pinnately divided with several lobes or teeth, long-tapered at base, later in growing system slender and often entire, < 10 – 25 × 1 – 2 mm, acute at tip, 1-veined with midrib sometimes slightly raised on lower surface, often folded upward from midrib, short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs. **Inflorescence:** heads, terminal in open, cymelike arrays of several heads, head radiate, mostly 8 – 14 mm across, of ca. 70 pistillate ray flowers and many bisexual disc flowers, bracteate; peduncle low-ridged, short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs, with hollow internodes; **involucre** hemispheroid to short bell-shaped, ca. 4.5 × 5 mm, short-hirsute, phyllaries 30 – 40, outer series of 8 phyllaries ca. 2 mm long, green, inner phyllaries in 2 – 3 series, oblong to oblanceolate, ca. 3 – 3.4 × 0.35 – 0.5 mm, membranous with raised green center having short-hirsute hairs, minutely fringed on acute to acuminate tip; receptacle convex, lacking bractlets (paleae), with minute axis for each ovary, glabrous. **Ray flower:** bilateral, 0.5 mm across (corolla limb); **calyx (pappus)** in 2 series, outer whorl of ca. 15 stiff, slender, scarious, minute scales, ascending, 0.10 – 0.3 mm long, inner series of 12 – 15 erect capillary bristles alternating with scales, 1.7 – 1.8 mm long, colorless; **corolla** unlobed to minutely 1-notched; tube flattened front-to-back, ca. 1.2 × 0.2 mm, colorless and inconspicuously 5-veined, lacking hairs; limb widely spreading, oblanceolate-linear, ca. 3.5 – 4 × 0.35 – 0.5 mm, white with purplish red strip on outer (lower) surface, never coiled; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1, included; ovary inferior, oblong-elliptic (compressed), ca. 1.2 × 0.25 – 0.3 mm, translucent having white callous at base, with ascending short hairs, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; **nectary disc** surrounding base of style, 0.1 mm long, white; style tips scarcely exposed at corolla orifice, < 1.5 mm long, 2-branched at midpoint, colorless below fork, the branches stigmatic, 0.6 mm long, white. **Disc flower:** radial, ca. 0.5 mm across (ovary), ca. 3 mm long; **calyx (pappus)** in 2 series, outer whorl of ca. 15 stiff, slender, scarious, minute scales, ascending, 0.10 – 0.3 mm long, inner series of 12 – 15 erect capillary bristles alternating with scales, 1.9 – 2.2 mm long, colorless; **corolla** 5-lobed, 2 – 2.5 mm long; tube ca. 0.5 mm long, colorless, 5-veined, not expanded around nectary disc, throat 5-ribbed, colorless, lacking hairs; lobes triangular, ca. 0.35 mm long, yellow and papillate on inner (upper) surface; **stamens** 5, attached to top of corolla tube, ± included (appendages of anthers); filaments threadlike, 0.7 – 0.8 mm, yellowish; anthers fused into cylinder surrounding style, basifixed, dithecal, 1 – 1.2 mm long including colorless acuminate appendages, sacs light orange, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light orange; **pistil** 1, ca. 2.5 mm long; ovary inferior,
oblong-elliptic (compressed), ca. 1.2 × 0.25–0.3 mm, translucent having white callous at base, with ascending short hairs, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; **nectary disc** surrounding base of style, ± 0.15 mm long, white, thin nectar in corolla tube; style included, 1.3–1.5 mm long, 2-branched, colorless below fork, the branches stigmatic and appressed, ca. 0.3 mm long, yellow. **Fruits:** cypselae (achenes) monomorphic with some pappus differences; cypsela 2-ribbed (2-veined) compressed top-shaped, 1–1.2 × 0.6 mm, pale gray, truncate at top, sparsely short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs, with straight short hairs at base; pappus of ray and disc flowers having series of ca. 15 minute, slender scales (setae) 0.1–0.3 mm long and inner series of ca. 15 capillary bristles 1.7–1.8 mm long (ray flowers) and 1.9–2.2 mm long (disc flowers) aging straw-colored; receptacle convex and appearing pitted with remnant of ovary attachment; involucre widely spreading in fruit (not reflexed).  

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