

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Euphorbia longicuris – WEDGE-LEAF EUPHORBIA [Euphorbiaceae]

Euphorbia longicuris Scheele, WEDGE-LEAF EUPHORBIA. Annual, taprooted, not rosetted, 1-stemmed at base, with ascending branches in canopy, erect, 10–25 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, upper cauline leaves appressed and strongly overlapping, glabrous; latex milky. **Stems:** cylindric, to 2.5 mm diameter, green but purple-red at ground level and hypocotyl. **Leaves:** helically alternate (pseudowhorled bracts at top of principal stem), simple and short-petiolate (lower leaves) and sessile (upper leaves and leafy bracts), without stipules; petiole short, indistinct from blade; blade spatulate to obovate, 8–10(–13) × < 2–4 mm, long-tapered at base, entire, rounded to truncate or shallowly notched (emarginate) at tip, pinnately veined with only midrib visible. **Inflorescence:** cyathium (= involucre with staminate flowers and 1 pistillate flower), terminal with 1 cyathium per fork, terminal and axillary in leafy cymelike arrays, terminal cluster of 3 ascending cymelike arrays from a “whorl” of 3 leaflike bracts, axillary inflorescences developing downward; primary axis (= peduncles subtended by bract) at the top of vegetative shoot with a terminal subsessile cyathium + an opposite pair of lateral secondary axes, potentially pattern continuing but decreasing upward, bracts subtending each fork 2, subequal and free or very short fused at base, leaflike strongly asymmetric and kidney-shaped to semicircular or oblate-oblong, to 6.5 × 12 mm, length < width, entire, rounded or with short point at tip, sometimes slightly glaucous; peduncle subtending cyathium subsessile, < 1 mm long; **involucre** bell-shaped with blunt angles, at anthesis 1.4–2 × 1–1.5 mm, light green but , glabrous, of 5 bracts and 4(–5, rarely) glands, the bracts of involucre fused most of length, tips tongue-like and ca. 0.3 mm long, light green white-fringed on margins, the glands alternate with bracts (usually 1 absent), nectar-producing, raised, widely spreading, crescent shaped to semicircular with a pair of ascending to divergent hornlike (fingerlike) extensions at opposite ends of each gland, gland body 0.4–0.8 × 0.8–1.1 mm + horns 0.5–0.8 mm long, the body producing nectar, flattish to cupped, light greenish yellow and minutely bumpy, the horns mostly light yellow; staminate flowers 10–15 in 5 clusters of 2–3; bractlet subtending staminate flower pedicel linear, 0.6–0.9 mm long, white, with several short hairs at tip; pedicel of staminate flower indistinct from filament, white; pedicel of pistillate flower at anthesis short becoming to 2.5 mm long, exerted and curved downward in fruit, green and glabrous. **Staminate flower:** reduced to 1 stamen; **perianth** absent; **stamen** 1, free, at anthesis exerted from involucre and glands; filament 1–1.3 mm long, white, swollen at base at junction with peduncle; anther dorsifixed, dithecal, ca. 0.2 mm long, dull light orange, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow-orange; **pistil** absent. **Pistillate flower:** **perianth** absent; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1, erect at anthesis; ovary superior, somewhat 3-lobed, at anthesis 0.5–0.8 × 0.7–0.8 mm, pale light green, glabrous, 3-chambered, each chamber with 1 ovule; styles 3, fused only at base, suberect with lobes later spreading, 0.5–0.6 mm long, pale green, shallowly 2-branched to midpoint, each branch ca. 0.1 mm long with stigmatic tip. **Fruit:** schizocarpic capsule, 3-seeded, 3-lobed and broadly triangular-ovoid, ca. 2.5 × 2.8–2.9 mm, glabrous, elastically dehiscent along septa and chambers into 6 dry valves and expelling seeds, margins of valves often somewhat roughened along sutures. **Seed:** with fleshy caruncle (aril), the caruncle archlike, 0.8 mm wide with 0.5 × 0.5 mm halves, whitish, relatively thin; quadrangular-

oblong, 1.3–1.7 × 0.9–1.1 mm, gray on frosty surface, black drying brown beneath
minutely frosted with a finely netted epidermis, having longitudinal rows with to 10 pits.
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