

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Euphorbia dentata – TOOTHED SPURGE [Euphorbiaceae]

Euphorbia dentata Michx., TOOTHED SPURGE. Annual, taprooted, not rosetted, 1-stemmed at base, ± erect with paired, ascending branches along main axis, 20–42 cm tall; monoecious; shoots mostly puberulent; latex white, copious. **Stems:** cylindrical, to 4 mm in diameter, internodes 12–90 mm long, puberulent. **Leaves:** opposite decussate and in canopy often helically alternate, simple, petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, on swellings at base of petiole with tiny glandular tips; petiole channeled, 5–25 mm long, puberulent; blade narrowly ovate to lanceolate or narrowly lanceolate, (15–)25–65 × 12–25 mm, > petiole, tapered at base, dentate-serrate on margins, blunt-acute at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins whitish and raised on lower surface, upper surface glabrate with several hairs, lower surface evenly pubescent with scattered hairs to 0.8 mm long. **Inflorescence:** cyathium (= involucre with staminate flowers and 1 pistillate flower), terminal in dense, flat-topped, cymelike array, terminal array typically 3-branched subtended by a pseudowhorl of 3 leaflike, short-petiolate bracts, the petiole flattened, to 1.6 mm long and wide, pale green, the blade acuminate-lanceolate, 15–35 × 5.5–8 mm, minutely serrate and often narrowly white on margins; along each principal branch having a bract subtending each branchlet, the largest oblong, ± 4.5 × 1.2 mm and whitish with 2 green stripes, decreasing upward, inconspicuously toothed above midblade and acute at tip; peduncle beneath cyathium 1 mm long at first flowering to 2 mm long in fruit; **involucre** bell-shaped, ± 2 × 1.5 mm, green, of 5 bracts and 1 gland, the bracts of involucre fused most of length, with fringed, white margins, the gland nectar-producing, stalked, deeply cupped and compressed funnel-shaped with rounded rim (somewhat D-shaped), ca. 1 mm wide, green, without appendages; staminate flowers ca. 25 in 5 clusters, each cluster associated with a bractlet; bractlet linear, white, ca. 1.5 mm long, broader above midpoint and short-hairy; pistillate flower on a pedicel-like stalk (gynophore), at anthesis gynophore erect and ca. 2 mm long increasing to > cyathium in fruit, with styles initially exposed from involucre, soon gynophore elongating and having mature ovary fully exerted and becoming thicker. **Staminate flower:** reduced to 1 stamen; filament ca. 1.5 mm long, in each cluster elongating successively, white, with abscission constriction 1/3 from top; anthers conspicuously dithecal, each sac ellipsoid, ± 0.4 mm long, pale yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow. **Pistillate flower:** reduced to 1 pistil; ovary superior, 3-lobed spheroid, ± 1.5 mm wide, green and glaucous, glabrous, 3-chambered, each chamber with 1 ovule; styles 3, ca. 1 mm long, pale green at base to whitish above, 2-branched from near base; stigmas minute, whitish. **Fruit:** schizocarp (capsule), 3-seeded, 3-lobed subspheroid, 3.5–4 mm, glabrous, elastically dehiscent into 3 segments, glabrous; style persistent, calyx appressed and 3-lobed, with persistent, 3-ribbed central axis. **Seed:** with caruncle at attachment, ovoid with flat-oblique top, 2–2.2 × 1.7–1.8 mm, brown, conspicuously bumpy with rough projections, with a dark brown line from the lowest point of oblique face to base of seed; caruncle versatile on oblique end of seed by a very short stalk, mushroom-shaped, 0.4–0.6 mm across, whitish drying yellowish, firm, often persistent.

A. C. Gibson