

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Hydrocotyle umbellata – UMBRELLA WATER PENNYWORT [Araliaceae/Apiaceae]

Hydrocotyle umbellata L., UMBRELLA WATER PENNYWORT. Perennial herb, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted at nodes, lacking aboveground stems, with erect to ascending leaves and flowering shoots, in range to 25 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, glabrous, lacking any distinctive odor; rhizomes cylindric, 1.2–1.5 mm diameter, white, internodes often 20–60 mm long, with tuberlike swelling at node; adventitious roots many at nodes. **Leaves:** alternate, simple and umbrellalike (peltate), long-petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, attached to stem, broadly triangular, 2–3 mm long, scarious and brownish; petiole cylindric, 130–260 × 1–3 mm, white belowground and green aboveground; blade round, 13–63 mm, shallow and broad, subequal lobes, lobes closely spaced, sometimes with a pair of lobes overlapped at base, crenate on lobe margins, palmately veined to each lobe, with 12–16 principal veins from center, upper surface glossy. **Inflorescence:** condensed raceme, axillary, of 30+ helically alternate flowers at tip of long, unbranched axis, at anthesis 10–15 mm across, bracteate, glabrous; peduncle same length as petiole of associated leaf; rachis internodes short; bractlet subtending pedicel cupped boat-shaped, 0.7–1.2 mm long, colorless with green vein, persistent; pedicel spreading to ascending, at anthesis 4–5.5 × 0.25 mm increasing 2× in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 3 mm across; **sepals** absent; **petals** 5, spreading at anthesis later deflexed, triangular-ovate, 1 × 0.7–0.8 mm, white to greenish white, 1-veined, without midridge, abscised in developing fruit; **Stamens** 5, free, alternate with petals; filaments spreading, ± 0.5 mm long, white; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, ca. 0.45–0.5 mm long, yellowish green aging yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior with ± fleshy, cushionlike platform (stylopodium, stylar tissue) on top having 2 semicircular halves 0.5–0.7 mm, pale green with minute purplish speckles, ovary semicircular in outline and compressed ⊥ septum, 1.2–1.3 × 1.2–1.3 mm, green, with 3 ribs on each side and 1 on each edge, 2-chambered, each chamber with 1 ovule; styles 2, arched inward, ± 0.4 mm long, white or pale green; stigmas terminal, minute. **Fruit:** schizocarp, of 2 dry 1-seeded halves (mericarps), mericarps D-shaped in outline strongly compressed, ± 2 × 1.4–1.6 mm, ca. 0.7 mm thick on margin with fruit wall unevenly thickened around seed, weakly ribbed, glabrous; carpophore absent. **Seed:** D-shaped and compressed side-to-side, ca. 1.2 mm long, firmly attached to fruit wall.

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