

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Juncus bufonius var. *bufonius* – TOAD RUSH [Juncaceae]

Juncus bufonius L. var. *bufonius*, TOAD RUSH. Annual, fibrous-rooted, several–many-stemmed at base, cespitose, often densely tufted, ascending to decumbent, in range 5–30 cm tall; shoots arising from horizontal stem at base, having 1–3 cauline leaves with ensheathing bases and a branched, terminal inflorescence, glabrous. **Stems:** horizontal stem < 2 mm diameter basal diameter \pm 0.7 mm; vertical stem cylindrical at base but minutely ridged above. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath open, margins broad-membranous and overlapping, lacking lobes (auricles) at top; blade linear, 30–130 \times 0.5–1.5 mm wide, the longest above midshoot, in \times -section broadly U-shaped (channeled) to hemi-cylindric, entire and margins not membranous, parallel-veined, veins median and often red, crosswalls (septa) within blade absent. **Inflorescence:** cymelike, terminal, with 1 flower at each fork and 1–3 axes arising below each flower, bracteate, glabrous; bract subtending the lowest fork \geq the longest branch of the inflorescence, with membranous margins near base; branch length from each fork unequal; bract subtending branches decreasing upward and generally < axis, at terminal fork bract + prophyll, the lower bract ensheathing prophyll, decreasing to 3 mm long, membranous aging scarious; flower appearing short-stalked; bractlets (bracteoles) subtending flower 2, alternate distichous, ovate, ca. 2 mm long, neither completely ensheathing, membranous aging scarious, venation obscure. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 1 mm across, closed; **tepals** 6 in 2 somewhat different whorls, erect, acuminate-lanceolate, of outer whorl at anthesis 3.5–4.5 mm (sepals), back rounded, green with membranous margins, of inner whorl (petals) 0.5–1 mm < outer whorl at anthesis and in fruit, \pm flat with wide membranous margins, tepals persistent and ascending around fruit; **stamens** (3–)6, free, included; filaments \pm 1 mm long, whitish; anthers basifixed, dithecal, oval, ca. 0.6 mm long, yellowish, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellowish; **pistil** 1, 1–1.2 mm long; ovary superior, rounded 3-sided, greenish, 1-chambered with many ovules; style 3-branched, basal portion 0.3–0.5 mm long, the stigmatic branches spreading, pinkish, papillate. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 3 valves, many-seeded, oblong-obovoid, 3–3.5 \times 1.5–2.2 mm, \pm rounded at tip, shorter than persistent outer tepals but sometimes exceeding inner tepals, dry valves stiff and brownish. **Seed:** ovoid to ellipsoid, ca. 0.3–0.45 mm long, yellowish brown but reddish at abrupt ends connected by a fine reddish line, lacking tail (appendage).

A. C. Gibson