

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Juncus interior – INTERIOR RUSH [Juncaceae]

Juncus interior Wieg., INTERIOR RUSH. Perennial herb, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, several–many-stemmed at base, cespitose, tufted, ascending to suberect, in range to 40 cm tall; shoots arising from horizontal rhizome, having to 6 leaves, to 3 appearing as cauline leaves but actually basal leaves with long sheaths attach close to rhizome, glabrous; rhizome condensed, to 4 mm diameter, white often purplish red on margins next to pigmented adventitious roots; adventitious roots on rhizome. **Stems:** elliptic in \times -section, hidden by leaf sheaths, to 1.3×0.9 mm, whitish. **Leaves:** alternate, simple with sheath; sheath open, margins broad-membranous (to 3 mm wide) and overlapping, smooth, with lobes (auricles) at top, auricles 0.25–0.3 mm long, brownish, aging papery; blade slender and linear long tapered to tip, 30–190 mm long, the longest above midshoot, in \times -section broadly U-shaped (channeled) to hemi-cylindric approaching tip, entire and margins not membranous, parallel-veined, crosswalls (septa) within blade absent. **Inflorescence:** cymelike, terminal, with 1 flower at each fork, with a cluster of to 5 unequal branches arising from top of culm, the longest, oldest cymelike branch < 55 mm long, of the oldest branch to 13-flowered, length of branch (peduncle) and number of flowers decreasing to the youngest, bracteate, glabrous; bract and prophyll subtending each branch and branchlet in cymelike arrays, bract subtending the lowest fork mostly \geq the oldest branch of the inflorescence, to 70 mm long, of bract open sheath to 10 mm long including membranous margins and auricles at top and suberect, leaflike blade ca. 0.5 mm wide, of prophyll membranous and closed, low 2-keeled, to 3.5 mm long, truncate or short 2-toothed at top and closed portion ca. 1 mm long; at successive forks bract sheath and blade decreasing and prophyll shorter, blade of “terminal” flower in an array with vestigial blade < 1 mm long and bract to 2 mm long; flower appearing short-stalked; bractlets (bracteoles) subtending and closely appressed to flower 2, alternate distichous, ovate with overlapping bases, $\pm 2 \times 2.5$ mm, lower > upper, neither completely ensheathing, membranous aging scarious, venation obscure. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 5 mm across (tepals spreading); **tepals** 6 in 2 whorls, erect, acuminate-broadly lanceolate to lanceolate, at anthesis $3\text{--}3.3 \times 0.5\text{--}1.2$ mm increasing up to 4.4 mm long in fruit, rounded on back, green with membranous margins, persistent and appressed in fruit; **stamens** 6, free, included; filaments somewhat flattened front-to-back, 0.5–0.9 mm long, whitish; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 0.4–0.6 mm long, glossy pale green, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellowish; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, rounded 3-sided, ca. 1.1×0.7 mm, glossy light green, 1-chambered with many ovules attached in 3 strips; style 3-branched, basal portion 0.1–0.2 mm long, pale rose, the stigmatic branches initially corkscrewlike, reddish, later ascending to 1.3 mm long, papillate. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 3 valves, many-seeded, 3-sided broadly ellipsoid to spheroid, $\pm 4\text{--}4.5$ mm long, \geq tepals, tan to brownish tan. **Seed:** ellipsoid or somewhat curved, 0.4–0.5 mm long, lacking tail (appendage).

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