

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Kyllinga brevifolia – SHORTLEAF UMBRELLASEDGE, GREENHEAD SEDGE [Cyperaceae]

Kyllinga brevifolia Rottb., SHORTLEAF UMBRELLASEDGE, GREENHEAD SEDGE. Perennial herb (aquatic), clonal, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, creeping mat with solitary, erect to ascending shoots conspicuously spaced mostly 10–20 mm apart along horizontal, shallow rhizomes (emergent shoots arising from every second node), in range < 21 cm tall; shoots the lowest 2 basal leaves lacking a blade, the third basal leaf with a diminutive blade, and the uppermost basal leaf or leaves with an ascending, emergent blade, glabrous; rhizomes in shallow water to wet soil, wiry, cylindric, to 2 mm diameter, whitish, concealed by sheathing cataphylls, the cataphylls to 16 mm long and closed above midpoint, free portion triangular to 6 mm long, initially white, aging with purplish parallel veins and later tissue purplish brown; adventitious roots from rhizome nodes. **Stem (culm):** 3-sided, 6-ridged, to 1.3 mm diameter, green; internode hollow. **Leaves:** alternate, simple with sheath; prophyll closed, flattened and 2-keeled, triangular, to 4 × 1.5 mm, whitish sometimes with purple veins above midpoint; sheath of basal leaves closed to base of blade, with raised midvein; ligule absent; blade linear folded upward near base and flat above, of the upper leaf in range to 90 × 3 mm, entire, acute at tip, parallel-veined. **Inflorescence:** spikelets in terminal, spikelike head, at top of culm subtended by (3–)4 sessile, leaflike, alternate tristichous inflorescence bracts, head ovoid, in range 4–6 × 4–4.5 mm, at anthesis green, spikelets densely helically alternate to 100, ascending to suberect and subsessile, with 2 florets, in range the lower floret bisexual (staminate) and the upper floret neuter, bracteate, glabrous; inflorescence bracts closely spaced, decreasing upward, the lowest bract erect to suberect and the longest, in range to 60 × 2.7 mm, bracts 2 and 3, ascending-spreading to widely spreading and somewhat shorter and narrower, bract 4 diminutive often concealed by the lowest bract and linear, margins with several scabrous teeth, of the leaflike bracts with teeth approaching tip, of the diminutive bract with teeth base-to-tip; stalk of spikelet < 0.3 mm long; head on a robust shoot sometimes having 1 or 2 diminutive lateral heads at base axillary to inflorescence bracts. **Spikelet:** elliptic in outline flattened front-to-back, to 2.5 mm long, = 2 nested, alternate distichous bractlets, bractlets equal to subequal (lower ≥ upper), keeled, with green midvein having scabrous teeth and a short point at tip (mucronate), the mucron to 0.4 mm long, membranous blade lateral segments ovate, to 0.7 mm wide each segment with 2 faint and fine lateral veins. **Bisexual flower:** cleistogamous; **perianth** absent; **stamen** in range 1, free; filament ca. 0.5 mm long, colorless; anther basifixed, dithecal, in range ca. 0.8 mm long, pale yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen colorless; **pistil** 1, to 2.7 mm long, minutely stalked; ovary superior, ellipsoid compressed front-to-back, 0.4–0.5 × 0.3 × 0.15 mm, nearly colorless (greenish), glabrous; style 2-branched, translucent, lower portion 0.6–1 mm long, the branches ca. 1 mm long and often partially exerted. **Fruit:** achene, short-stalked, compressed ellipsoid, 1–1.2 × 0.6–0.8 mm, brown, the stalk (gynophore) to 0.2 mm long.

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