

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Lepidium ruderale – ROADSIDE PEPPERWEED [Brassicaceae]

Lepidium ruderale L., ROADSIDE PEPPERWEED. Annual, taprooted, initially rosetted, 1-stemmed at base, in canopy having a spreading to ascending lateral branches from successive nodes, in range to 35 cm tall; shoots initially with basal leaves and above with cauline leaves, foliage odorous (sulfurous) when crushed, essentially glabrous, lobed leaves absent on old plants. **Stems:** cylindric, to 4 mm diameter, having crescent-shaped leaf scars, glabrous. **Leaves:** helical alternate, odd-1–2-pinnately lobed with several pairs of primary lateral lobes and petiolate (basal and the lowermost cauline leaves) and simple and sessile (most cauline leaves), without stipules; petiole flattened top-to-bottom slightly curved, to 30 mm long; blade oblong in outline, 30–60 mm long. lobes oblong and entire or with teeth, pinnately veined with principal veins slightly raised on lower surface; of cauline leaves linear, $< 10\text{--}30 \times 0.6\text{--}1.5+$ mm, entire with widely spaced minute teeth on margins, acute, 1-veined. **Inflorescence:** raceme and panicle of racemes, terminal, to 100-flowered, flat-topped to depressed at narrow tip, to 80×8 mm, lacking bracts; rachis low-ridge with 1 ridge descending from each pedicel, green, glabrous; pedicel at anthesis erect to suberect, subcylindric (not compressed), 1.2–1.4 mm long increasing $2\times$ in fruit, green, puberulent on upper side. **Flower:** bisexual, \pm radial, 0.5 mm across, essentially cleistogamous; **sepals** 4, acute cupped-obovate, 0.4–0.6 mm long, rounded on back, green with thinner, jagged white tip, glabrous or with several short hairs, early-deciduous; **petals** in range absent or 4 minute and whitish; **stamens** 2, free, cupped by a pair of opposite sepals on the broad side of ovary; filaments erect, 0.5–0.7 mm long, white; anthers basifixed, dithecal, ca. 0.2 mm long, pale yellowish, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen white; **nectaries** absent; **pistil** 1, included within bud; ovary superior, 2-lobed and \pm circular, at anthesis 0.4×0.5 mm, green, septum well-defined, glabrous, 2-chambered, each chamber with 1 ovule; style ± 0.1 mm long; stigma capitate, ± 1 mm diameter, colorless, papillate. **Fruit:** siliqua (silicle), dehiscent by 2 valves from an fusiform septum, 2-seeded, essentially round to broadly elliptic with short notch at top, 1.5–2 mm, compressed and biconvex but not inflated, notch ca. 0.2 mm deep, glabrous, inner surface veiny when light brown. **Seed:** compressed D-shaped with contour of bent embryo, ca. 1.4×0.7 mm, orangish.

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