

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Mimosa nuttallii – NUTTALL SENSITIVE-BRIAR, CATCLAW SCHRANKIA, CATCLAW SENSITIVE-BRIAR, SHAME-BOY [Fabaceae]

Mimosa nuttallii (Nutt.) B. L. Turner, NUTTALL SENSITIVE-BRIAR, CATCLAW SCHRANKIA, CATCLAW SENSITIVE-BRIAR, SHAME-BOY. Perennial herb, trailing, spinescent, not rosetted, several-stemmed from base, branches long (to 1200 mm) with axillary inflorescences, procumbent, spreading, and trailing close to ground and on neighboring plants; andromonoecious; shoots with only compound cauline leaves, secondary leaflets folding together when touched (thigmotropic), internodes long and armed with sharp prickles. **Stems:** 8-ridged, to 3 mm diameter, with 3 ridges descending from each leaf, tough, ridges red and furrows green, having backward-leaning prickles and sessile glandular hairs in furrows. **Leaves:** helically alternate, even-2-pinnately compound in range with 5–7 pairs of primary leaflets (pinnae) spaced 7–13 mm apart, primary leaflet having to 14 pairs of secondary leaflets, petiolate with pulvinus, with stipules; stipules 2, attached to leaf base below pulvinus, threadlike, 2–4(–7) mm long, short-hairy; petiole pulvinus narrower than petiole axis, above pulvinus 4-ridged and 4-sided (not channeled), with arched short hairs, having slightly depressed glands along upper side, lower side with prickles to 2 mm long; rachis 4-sided, to 63 mm long + acuminate extension 1.5–3 mm long, with 10+ prickles on lower side; stipels 2 subtending petiolule on upper side, straight, 0.6–0.8 mm long, reddish; petiolule pulvinus ascending; rachilla to 23 mm long, with prickles on lower side; secondary petiolule pulvinus, 0.25–0.3 mm long, light green; blades of secondary leaflets oblong (elliptic), 1.8–5.5 × 0.7–1.4 mm, asymmetric at base, entire and short-ciliate on margins, obtuse with short point at tip, 3-veined at base, venation visible but not raised until drying. **Inflorescence:** headlike spike, axillary, 1–2 per node and branch appearing like a leafy cymelike array, spike on long peduncle, peduncle > petiole, spike hemispheroid, 21–24 mm across (exserted stamens), 75+-flowered, flowers helically alternate, subsessile, lower flowers staminate and upper flowers bisexual; bracteate; peduncle ridged, to 60 mm long increasing 2× in fruit, having numerous backward-curved prickles; rachis cylindrical, ca. 5 × 1.5 mm, with glandular hairs and somewhat viscid; bractlet subtending pedicel spoon-shaped and cupped, 0.5–1 mm long, green and purple-red at tip, sparsely short-ciliate on margins; pedicel < 0.3 mm long, white, glabrous. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, ca. 3 mm across (stamens); receptacle with **nectary** at base of stalk of pistil; **calyx** 5-toothed, bell-shaped, 0.8 mm long, with gland on each tooth; **corolla** 5-lobed, funnel-shaped; tube 2 mm long, 1.5 mm wide at orifice, translucent but green along 5 veins, low 5-ridged; lobes acute-oblong, ± 1.5 × 0.5 mm, green with red on tips; **stamens** 10, free; filaments ascending, subequal and ± straight, 9–10 × 0.15 mm, orchid; anthers dorsifixed-versatile, dithecal, 0.3–0.4 mm, pale light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale light yellow; **pistil** 1, concealed (included), short-stalked; ovary superior, fusiform-oblong to fusiform, 1.4–1.7 × 0.35 mm, pale green or greenish, dimpled on sides with lines of papillae, 1-chambered with 10–20 ovules on upper side; style often coiled, to 2.5 mm long, white at base to orchid above; stigma terminal, recessed. **Fruit:** pod (legume), to 5 ascending to spreading from upper portion of rachis, dehiscent by lengthwise strips (ridges), in range 10– < 20-seeded in tight row, linear and somewhat cylindrical, 45–100 × 3–3.5 mm and beak to 3 mm long, spinescent with rows of prickles

(including on lower beak), especially along ridges and minutely speckled, ridges base-to-tip and 0.5–1 mm high, prickles slight curved (straight-tipped), \pm 1.5 mm long; stalk ca. 2 mm long and pedicel $<$ 1 mm long. **Seed:** ellipsoid or oblong (when not crowded) to trapezoidal or parallelogram-like (tightly packed), 3.8–7.5 \times 2.8–3 mm, \pm glossy dark brown, with short, subterminal hilum.

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