

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Mollugo verticillata – CARPETWEED, INDIAN CHICKWEED [Molluginaceae]

Mollugo verticillata L., CARPETWEED, INDIAN CHICKWEED. Annual, taprooted, early-rosetted, several-stemmed at base, with procumbent principal branches, < 10 cm tall; shoots with a short-lived whorl of basal leaves and whorls of thin cauline leaves, glabrous. **Stems:** cylindric, slender with conspicuous pulvinus at base of each branch, internodes 20–35 mm long. **Leaves:** whorled, mostly 3–5(–7) per node, simple, sessile (rosette leaves short-petiolate), lacking obvious stipules; petiole indistinct from blade, to 4 mm long; blade oblanceolate or narrowly obovate to linear or narrowly elliptic, to 25 × 1.5–6.5 mm, long-tapered at base, entire, acute at tip, obscurely pinnately veined with midrib sunken on upper surface and raised on lower surface. **Inflorescence:** appearing whorled (verticillate) in fruit but initially of 3–6 helically alternate, pedicellate flowers (obscurely axillary), at each node having 1 continuing shoot with an inflorescence at first node + axillary verticil of flowers of different ages and sizes; bract subtending inflorescence and bractlet subtending pedicels but not clearly assignable to a given flower, bract ca. 1 mm long and bractlets 0.5–1 mm long, membranous with green midvein, sparsely minutely ciliate; pedicel slender, at anthesis 4–5 mm long increasing some in fruit, green, with inconspicuous glandular hairs having minute, yellowish heads. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, ca. 3 mm across; **sepals** 5, oblong and obtuse at tip, at anthesis ca. 1.5 × 0.9 mm increasing in fruit, having membranous margins and tip and 3 raised, green veins, the midvein branched above midpoint and fusing with lateral veins but midvein not penetrating membranous tip; **petals** absent; **stamens** 3, fused in whorl by a short cylinder, stamens opposite furrows of ovary; filaments flattened, 1.5 mm long, white; anthers dorsifixed (essentially versatile), dithecal, 0.5 mm long, white, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen white; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, 2–3 mm long, green, with swelling at base and fine-ribbed on each valve, 3-chambered, each chamber with 10+ ovules; styles 3, ascending, ca. 0.35 mm long, white, stigmatic tips conspicuously papillate. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, 3-valved, to 35-seeded, conspicuously 3-lobed, 1.5–3 × 1.2–1.6 mm, valves thin and papery and with bulging seeds embossed with ridges of seeds; beaks (styles) persistent within depression at top. **Seed:** ± kidney-shaped, ca. 0.6 × 0.5 × 0.3 mm, glossy red-brown, in range mostly with 5 ribs curved along back of seed and having thin areas textured with cell outlines, with a short post at funiculus.

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