

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Oenothera patriciae – PLAINS GAURA [Onagraceae]

Oenothera patriciae W. L. Wagner & Hoch (syn. *Gaura brachycarpa*), PLAINS GAURA. Perennial herb, taprooted, 1–several-stemmed at base, in range trailing to decumbent, to 25 cm tall; shoots with basal leaves and cauline leaves, basal leaves absent at flowering, in range pilose and short-pilose. **Stems:** cylindric, to 2.5 mm diameter, tough, internodes to 30 mm long, with radiating straight hairs to 2 mm long slightly enlarged at base, stomates on surface, aging reddish. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, short-petiolate to sessile, without stipules; petiole flat on upper side, to 2.5 mm long, whitish, short-pilose on lower side; blade lanceolate, in range $< 30\text{--}50 \times < 7\text{--}13$ mm, tapered at base, appearing entire to subentire obscurely lobed with several red callus points on margins, acute to acuminate at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins raised on lower surface, veins whitish, upper surface sparsely pilose, lower surface with uniform, denser short-pilose hairs. **Inflorescence:** raceme, terminal, with many helically alternate flowers and buds tightly spaced at tip, flowers at anthesis sessile increasing somewhat in fruit, bracteate, short-strigose; rachis with internodes elongating before anthesis and during fruit development; bractlet subtending pedicel or ovary narrowly ovate, $2.6\text{--}3 \times 1$ mm, beige with faint red-purplish streaks, cupping lower ovary, 7-veined at base, acute at tip, short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs, deciduous; pedicel ascending, at anthesis to 0.3 mm long, whitish, and glabrous in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral by secondary orientation with petals spreading to upper side and stamens on lower side, ca. 15 mm across; hypanthium above ovary, in range ca. 6.5 mm long, lower portion slightly swollen and ellipsoid 1.5×1 mm (nectary), above narrowly funnel-shaped, pale green with 4(8) pale rose stripes, short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs, internally with 4 ridges and densely short-villous; **nectary** at base of hypanthium surrounding style base, ca. 1 mm long, producing thin nectar; **sepals** (3–)4, separate and at anthesis strongly reflexed, oblong, in range ca. 9×1 mm, 3-veined at base, yellowish to light green with red pigment at tip and a light rose midvein, acute at tip, short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs on outer (lower) surface; **petals** (3–)4, spreading, short-clawed, broadly spatulate to obovate, ca. 8×2.5 mm including claw to 1 mm long, at anthesis pure white (night-time) fading to rose (morning) and drying darker; **stamens** (6)8 in 1 set, free, arising from hypanthium rim, monomorphic, each with a toothlike appendage (scale) at base on inner side; filaments ascending to suberect, somewhat narrowly club-shaped but fine at tip, in range 6.5–7 mm long, white, glabrous; anthers exserted, dorsifixed, dithecal, linear to linear-oblong, $3.2\text{--}3.5 \times 0.35$ mm, dark crimson, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen colorless, pollen grains 3-pointed, held in a mass by minute threads (viscin threads); **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, ascending, 4-sided grooved on each face, ca. 3.5×0.8 mm, pale green, sparsely short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs, 4-chambered, each chamber with 1 pendulous ovule below midpoint; style exserted above anthers, cylindric, in range ca. 20 mm long, above nectary greenish and short-villous to top of hypanthium, above hypanthium white changing to dark rose at top and glabrous, at top with thin disc ca. 1.5 mm across below stigma lobes; stigma conspicuously 4-lobed, lobes initially erect later spreading, fingerlike, 0.5–0.7 mm long, papillate surface greenish. **Fruit:** capsule, indehiscent and nutlike, 4-seeded, ascending, strongly (3–)4-sided with or without a short, stout stalk at base and \pm

truncate at top, somewhat pyramidal, in range ca. 8×3 mm and whitish stalk to 0.5 mm long, edges rounded, faces partially grooved. **Seed:** ovoid, $2.5 \times 1.4 \times 1$ mm, light brown.
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