

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Parthenocissus heptophylla – SEVENLEAF CREEPER [Vitaceae]

Parthenocissus heptophylla (Buckl.) Small, SEVENLEAF CREEPER. Woody climber (liana), drought-deciduous, with tendrils, in range trailing and climbing over low vegetation (climbing trees and shrubs), trailing shoots generally < 1.5 m long; shoot with only cauline leaves and tendrils, glabrous; tendril opposite leaf at node, glabrous, mostly with 3 axes, in range to 105 mm long, 2-forked about 35 mm from base, with bract subtending fork, the shorter branch to 45 mm long, the longer branch also 2-forked with ultimate axes to 25 mm long, bract at fork \pm oblong to awl-shaped, 2.5–3.5 mm long decreasing upward, colorless, with jagged tip; terminal axes slender and < 20 mm long. **Stems:** cylindric, zigzagged or not, internodes to 80 mm long, woody twigs tough and flexible, to ca. 5 mm diameter, bark red-brown with lens-shaped lenticels. **Leaves:** helically alternate, odd-1-palmately compound with (2–4)5–8 leaflets, long-petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, attached across node, asymmetrical triangular to narrowly triangular, 2.5–6.2 \times 1.2–1.8 mm, mostly colorless with green center or reddish; petiole pulvinus to 18 \times 5 mm on large leaves to only enlarged at base, above 2-channeled above with raised midvein, 85–155 mm long, glabrous but at top with coarse, upright hairs < 1 mm long between petiole and petiolules; petiolules to 13 mm long but indistinct from blade, decreasing terminal to laterals, tough, with raised midvein and ridgelike edges, having several short hairs; blades of leaflets obovate (ovate), (< 30–)50–122 \times 13–43 mm, terminal leaflet the largest but not significantly so, tapered at base, serrate on margins to coarsely serrate above midblade, acute at tip, pinnately veined with most veins slightly sunken on upper surface and principal veins \pm raised on lower surface, upper surface initially pubescent along midrib and margins (especially at sinuses), lower surface short-hirsute to hirsute along veins, whitish at sinuses. **Inflorescence:** cymelike, opposite leaf at node (as a modified tendril), mostly twice 2-forked with axes diverging at 90°, each ultimate branchlet with several 3-flowered cymes and to 11-flowered, bracteate; peduncle > internode above the lower fork > internode above the upper fork, puberulent with short glandular hairs having minute heads; bract subtending each fork oblong, 3 \times 0.7 mm decreasing upward, papery aging purplish red, the largest with a couple parallel veins at base, early-abscising; bractlet subtending pedicel triangular to deltate, 0.6–1 mm long, green with colorless margins aging purple-red; pedicel cylindric, ca. 1 mm long increasing 2–3 \times in fruit, green, with puberulent with short glandular hairs having minute heads. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, ca. 5 mm across (petals) and in bud 3 mm across; **calyx** weakly lobed or unlobed and cup-shaped, 0.7–0.8 mm long, green, fleshy below midpoint, subentire or with 1 or more unevenly spaced, inconspicuous teeth on thin margin, sometimes splitting downward; **petals** 5–6, free but tightly abutted forming a caplike bud cover (calyptra), at anthesis petals becoming reflexed or separately abscising at base, at anthesis \pm acute-oblong in outline, 2.7–3 \times 1.4 mm increasing after anthesis to 3.5 mm long and sigmoid in side view, green (blushed reddish) but whitish and thin on reflexed base, above base thick-walled, hooded with short inward-facing margins (in bud) and infolded margins, glabrous; **stamens** 5–6, free, opposite petals and in bud each held in place by hook of petal, at anthesis ascending; filaments flattened front-to-back, ca. 1.5 mm long, pale pink; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 1.6–1.8 mm long, pale light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow;

nectary disc 5-lobed, around base of ovary, pinkish and rose, with calyx filled with thin nectar; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, 5-sided pyramidal (aging ovoid), ca. 2×1.5 mm, cream-colored to whitish, glabrous, 2-chambered, each chamber with 2 ovules attached at base of central placenta; style indistinguishable from ovary; stigma terminal, inconspicuously 3-lobed, colorless. **Fruit:** berry, fleshy, 1–4-seeded, oblate-spheroid, ca. 8×9 – 10 mm, blackish, with short, truncated beak at top; pulp purple-red; pedicel 5 – 6×2 mm, brown to olive-brown. **Seed:** 3-sided rounded on back with 2 flat lateral sides, in range 4.6 – 5×4.2 – 4.5 mm, brown.

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