

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Parthenocissus inserta – WOODBINE, THICKET CREEPER [Vitaceae]

Parthenocissus inserta (A. Kern.) Fritsch [syn. *Parthenocissus vitacea* (Knerr) A. S. Hitchc.], WOODBINE, THICKET CREEPER. Woody climber (liana), drought-deciduous, with tendrils, trailing and climbing over low vegetation, trailing shoots to several meters long; shoots essentially glabrous; tendril opposite leaf base, on vegetative shoots at 2 successive node and absent from third node, stemlike but sometimes later becoming an inflorescence by forming flower buds on new forks, unequally forked, in range with 2–3 forks, tips swollen but not bulbous and with glandular blisters on outer curves, the lowest internode initially \pm 40 mm long elongating and becoming thickened while coiling around support, other internodes shorter, especially lower forks typically subtended within 3 mm by a stipulelike scale, the lowest scale of tendril 2–2.5 \times 1 mm, often 2-toothed, upper scales typically 1.2–1.5 mm long, scales abscising before tendril matures. **Stems:** low-ridged soon becoming cylindric and brownish red, flexible, internodes 20–110 mm long, somewhat swollen above node; lenticels fusiform and vertical, reddish brown; bark tight and light grayish brown bark. **Leaves:** helically alternate, 1-palmately compound with (2–)5 leaflets, long-petiolate with pulvinus, with stipules; stipules 2, fused to stem at node and scarcely to petiole, oblong to ovate, 4–7 \times 1.5–3.3 mm, somewhat asymmetric, margins somewhat membranous, acute to rounded at tip, drying papery and abscising before leaf fully mature leaving a linear or slightly curved red scar on stem; petiole (40–)80–200 mm long, pulvinus cylindric to cylindro-conic at base; petiolules 1.5–8 mm long, each with 2 spreading to erect wings decurrent from leaflet blade and having a raised midvein on upper side; blades of leaflets ovate or broadly lanceolate to broadly elliptic, in range 40–130 \times 20–70 mm, tapered at base, coarsely serrate on margins, acute to acuminate at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins raised on lower surface, turning dark crimson before abscising during summer drought, upper surface sometimes sparsely short-strigose along principal veins. **Inflorescence:** cyme, opposite leaf at node (as a modified tendril), many-flowered, axis several-forked forming lateral branches with an ultimate, several-flowered, hemispheric and umbel-like cluster, bracteate, glabrous; bract subtending principal branch or branchlet like scales subtending tendril forks; bract subtending minor branchlets and bractlet subtending pedicel awl-shaped, to 0.5 mm long, aging brown and abscising before anthesis; pedicel 0.7–3.5 mm long increasing in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, ca. 4.5 mm across; **calyx** sharply cup-shaped, 0.75–1 mm long, green, subentire or with 1–5 unevenly spaced, low or inconspicuous teeth; **petals** 5, free but tightly abutted forming a caplike bud cover (calyptra), at anthesis spreading and later strongly recurved at base, elliptic to oblong in outline and S-shaped in side view, 3.8–4.3 \times 1.4–2.3 mm, green, thick, with infolded margins, hooded with short inward-facing margins (in bud) becoming outward when open with a downward-oriented hook 0.4 mm long continuous with infolded margins; **stamens** 5, free, opposite petals and in bud each held in place by hood of petal, at anthesis ascending to erect, often falling with petal; filaments 1.5–2.6 mm long, pale yellow-whitish; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, narrowly triangular, 1.3–2.1 mm long, light yellow to yellow, rounded at tip, connective thickish, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **pistil** 1, 2–2.8 mm long; ovary superior, ovoid and weakly 5–6-faced, yellow-green becoming reddish at base, tapering acuminate

into style, 2-chambered, each chamber with 2 ovules attached at base of central (intruded) placenta; style indistinguishable from ovary, thick conic; stigma terminal, sometimes depressed at top, pale yellow-green, minutely papillate. **Fruit:** berry, 1–4-seeded, in range \pm spheric, 6–8 mm, purple; skin (exocarp) clinging to pulp; pulp thin, juicy, colorless; inflorescence axes strawberry red during fruiting. **Seed:** obovoid heart-shaped, 3.5–4.5 \times 3.2–4 mm, brown, flattened on 1 or 2 faces next to adjacent seeds, smooth.

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