

## Vascular Plants of Williamson County

*Ranunculus sardous* – HAIRY BUTTERCUP, HAIRY CROWFOOT [Ranunculaceae]

*Ranunculus sardous* Crantz, HAIRY BUTTERCUP, HAIRY CROWFOOT. Perennial herb, fibrous-rooted from shoot caudex, lacking horizontal rhizomes, rosetted, 1–several-stemmed at base, with successive, ascending axillary branches, to 40 cm tall; shoots with basal leaves and several cauline leaves, hirsute with bulbous colorless bases (pigmented on red-purple axes); perennating base not bulbous (swollen); adventitious roots to 5 cm deep, not tuberlike. **Stems:** cylindric, to 4 mm diameter (not the widest at base), somewhat zigzagged, especially lower portion purple-red, conspicuously hirsute; internodes hollow. **Leaves:** helically alternate, 3-foliolate to 3-lobed often with sublobes and having terminal leaflet with or without petiolule, long-petiolate (basal leaves) especially winged at base (stipulelike) and petiolate; petioles of basal leaves to 120 mm long, with a pair of membranous wings to 22 mm at base, above flattish changing to channeled above midpoint, often tinged reddish or purplish, hirsute, of cauline leaves decreasing upward, green; blades of the lowest basal leaves somewhat kidney-shaped, shallowly 3-lobed, < 15–25 × < 20–35 mm, length < width; of most basal leaves 3-foliolate, widely heart-shaped in outline, to 45 × 55 mm, length < width, with wedge-shaped to fan-shaped segments, terminal segment symmetric, to 35 mm long, having sublobes and teeth rounded to obtuse decreasing center to side, palmately 3-veined at tapered base, lateral lobes asymmetric, terminal > paired lateral segments, having 2 principal veins at base; blade of cauline leaves deeply 3-parted, often with sublobes on the 3 principal lobes, upper leaves dissected into 3 narrower lobes with or without 1 or more sublobes, ultimate segments lanceolate-linear to oblanceolate-linear. **Inflorescence:** leafy cyme, terminal and axillary, having to 16 flowers, branches several-flowered maturing open, bracteate, strigose on light green axes and hirsute on bracts and bractlets; bract subtending the lowest branch leaflike, with 3 principal lobes often having narrower sublobes, < 35 mm long, and short-petiolate, at success nodes decreasing in length and changing to sessile and palmately dissected to 3-lobed having lanceolate-linear lobes with or without shorter sublobes then 2-lobed or 1-lobed; branchlet axes and pedicel ridged, pedicel with ridge descending from each sepal, green, strigose and short-strigose with upward-pointing hairs. **Flower:** bisexual, radiate, 17–22 mm across, rotate, in bud broadly spindle-shaped, green, and appearing 5-lobed, hirsute and with a ring of short-hirsute hairs at the base of calyx; receptacle narrowly conelike (torus) elongating after anthesis, the torus 2–2.5 mm tall, with hirsute hairs between pistils; **sepals** 5 in a whorl and scarcely overlapping, becoming strongly reflexed ca. 2 mm above base and upper portion deeply cupped, ovate with narrowly inrolled margins around cup to pubescent side, in range ca. 8 × 3 mm, ± colorless at base and above pale light yellow, 7-veined at base with veins slightly raised, sometimes with a partial, purplish midline below tip, blunt and somewhat thickened at tip, with long hairs somewhat concealed on surface facing pedicel, short hairs persistent as line along base; **petals** 5 in a whorl and not overlapping, widely spreading, not clawed, broadly obovate and somewhat cupped upward, in range 6–10 × 5.2–7.6 mm, bright yellow and upper surface highly glossy (varnishlike), rounded at tip, with ca. 5 radiating veins at base increasing to 20+ at top, glabrous; above each petal base = cuplike flap attached to upper petal base to midpoint covering **nectary**, trapezoidal, ca. 1.3 × 1.3 mm, the widest at truncate free top, bright yellow not glossy; **stamens** many, mostly 50–60 in several series, helically alternate, at

anthesis appearing flat-topped later widely spreading surrounding base of torus, free, 3.5–6.2 mm long, staminodes absent; filaments slender and becoming lax, light yellow but colorless at base, glabrous; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 2–2.5 mm long, bright yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistils** 18–35, helically alternate, on domelike aggregate to 2.5 mm long, each pistil vertically oriented and somewhat D-shaped with flat edge facing torus and curved edge projecting outward, at pollination to 0.8 mm long (concealed beneath layer of anthers); ovaries superior, compressed side-to-side, pale green on margins and colorless above chamber, glabrous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule attached at base; style tapered base-to-tip, short; stigma short-decurrent along inner side (adaxial) of style, papillate. **Fruits:** achenes with short persistent beak, helically arranged on conelike receptacle, D-shaped compressed side-to-side but sides not flat, ca. 2–3 × 2–3 × 1 mm, in range not textured; beak (style) curved, ca. 0.5 mm long; torus with hirsute hairs.

A. C. Gibson