

**Vascular Plants of Williamson County**  
*Rhynchosia minima* – LEAST STOUT BEAN [Fabaceae]

*Rhynchosia minima* (L.) DC., LEAST STOUT BEAN. Perennial vine, twining, not rosetted, several-stemmed at base, growing on support or trailing; shoots with only cauline leaves on flexible stems, puberulent and with scattered, sessile glandular hairs having yellowish heads. **Stems:** 6-ridged, < 2 mm diameter, with 3 conspicuous ridges descending from each leaf, tough, internodes usually twisted and to 85 mm long,  $\geq$  leaf, glandular hairs absent from ridges, nonglandular hairs downward-pointing with some longer hairs widely spaced along ridges. **Leaves:** helically alternate, pinnately-3-foliolate, petiolate with pulvinus, with stipules; stipules 2, attached to stem at node, acuminate, 2–3.2 mm long, green to reddish, sometimes with lateral tooth near base, puberulent, deciduous to late-deciduous; petiole pulvinus not noticeably swollen. 1–2.5 mm long, puberulent, above pulvinus strongly 5-ridged, glandular hairs scattered in furrows; rachis with a pair of conspicuous ridges on upper side, like petiole; stipel subtending lateral leaflet 1, subtending terminal leaflet 2, linear extensions of ridges < 0.35 mm long; petiolule = pulvinus ca. 1 mm long, puberulent with glandular hairs; bladelets of leaflets obovate to  $\pm$  diamond-shaped, in range to 30  $\times$  30 mm, broadly tapered to subtruncate or roundish, entire or with 2 broad, rounded lobes above midblade, acute to obtuse at tip, conspicuously 3-veined at base each pinnately veined with principal veins raised on both surface, glandular hairs denser on lower surface. **Inflorescence:** raceme, axillary, open, 5–13-flowered, bracteate, puberulent with scattered, sessile glandular hairs having yellowish heads; peduncle strongly 5-ridged, to 15 mm long; rachis ridged with a principal ridge descending from each pedicel; bractlet subtending pedicel narrowly acuminate, to 1 mm long, puberulent, early-deciduous from persistent base; pedicel arching, 0.5–0.7 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, papilionaceous, 1 mm across; **nectary** inconspicuous on receptacle below ovary; **calyx** 5-lobed from midpoint, green, puberulent with sessile glandular hairs; tube funnel-shaped to narrowly bell-shaped, ca. 1.3 mm diameter; lobes heteromorphic, appressed, lower lobe acuminate-linear, to 2.5 mm long, lateral 2 lobes ca. 1 mm long, upper portion deeply 2-lobed, lobes 1-veined, inner (upper) surface glabrous; **petals** 5, clawed, in range ca. 5 mm long, the claws whitish, limbs pale orange-yellow to light orange-yellow; banner obovate to roundish, ca. 5  $\times$  4 mm, claw blunt, < 1 mm long, limb folded over flower, with a pair of short teeth at base, outer (lower) surface with raised veins and puberulent with sessile glandular hairs, inner (upper) surface with radiating nectar lines; wings 2, < banner, claws slender, ca. 1.2 mm long, limbs obovate, ca. 3  $\times$  1.3 mm, with side-pointing basal lobe deltate, 0.5 mm long, whitish, glabrous; keel of 2 petals fused on lower side of limbs, = banner, glabrous, claws slender, ca. 1 mm long, whitish, limb broadly elliptic, ca. 3.5  $\times$  1.5 mm; **stamens** 10, diadelphous (9 fused and 1 free), ca. 5 mm long; filament sheet 2.5–3 mm long, whitish to pale green, free portions alternating long and short, glabrous; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, some slightly exerted, monomorphic,  $\pm$  0.35 mm long, pale orange-yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1, ca. 5 mm long, slightly exerted; ovary superior, ellipsoid, to 2.5 mm long, light green, short-sericeous with upward-pointing hairs, 1-chambered with 2–3 ovules attached on upper side; style cylindric, pale green aging white; stigma terminal, capitate, papillate. **Fruit:** pod (legume), dehiscent with valves slightly twisting (to 180°), mostly 2-

seeded, low hatchet-shaped and flat but bulging at seeds, 14–21 × 2.5–4 mm, brown to dark brown, with short point at tip, short-pilose and gland-dotted with ruby red heads.

**Seed:** plump kidney-shaped, 3.2–3.5 × 2–2.2 mm, hard, greenish to brown mottled usually black or light gray, glossy or not; hilum median.

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