

## Vascular Plants of Williamson County

*Rivina humilis* – PIGEON BERRY, ROUGE PLANT, COBALITO [Phytolaccaceae]

*Rivina humilis* L., PIGEON BERRY, ROUGE PLANT, COBALITO. Perennial herb, several-stemmed at base, much-branched having a lateral branch from each node, ascending, in range to 85 cm tall; shoot with only cauline leaves, glabrous. **Stems:** cylindrical, to 4 mm diameter, striped pale salmon and green, internodes to 100 mm long. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole channeled, to 30 mm long, striped pinkish with green; blade ovate,  $< 15\text{--}115 \times < 20\text{--}65$  mm, broadly tapered to truncate at base, entire, acute at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins conspicuously sunken on upper surface and raised and glossy on lower surface. **Inflorescence:** raceme, ascending, with  $> 25$  alternate flowers, flowers unevenly spaced, bracteate, glabrous; peduncle 4-sided, to  $5 \times \text{ca. } 1.5$  mm, with channels on upper and lower sides, reddish; rachis pink-ridged, to 150 mm long, with 1 ridge descending from each bractlet; bractlet appressed to pedicel, narrowly awl-shaped, 0.9–1.3 mm long, minutely papillate, aging spreading later arching, eventually persistent, greenish white, and  $\pm \perp$  in fruit; pedicel at anthesis 3.5–4 mm long, whitish to pale pink, minutely ridged and minutely papillate along ridges, 4-sided approaching flower, aging green and to 5 mm long in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 5.5–6 mm across, with widely spreading perianth; **perianth (sepals)** 4, pseudowhorled (actually closely opposite decussate), equal, obovate to broadly elliptic,  $3\text{--}3.4 \times 2\text{--}2.5$  mm, white tinged pink with lower pair having more pink and elliptic and upper pair obovate and slightly wider, aging pale green and then green with membranous pink margins and appearing reddish in fruit; **stamens** 4, alternate sepals, fused in ring at base surrounding ovary; filaments ascending,  $\pm 2$  mm long, white, persistent aging spreading and green later reddish; anthers basifixed, dithecal,  $\pm 0.7$  mm long, white, arrow-shaped at base, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen white; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, compressed lens-shaped,  $1.1\text{--}1.3 \times 1.1\text{--}1.3 \times 0.7\text{--}0.8$  mm, pale green aging green, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; style stout, 0.2–0.3 mm long, white; stigma terminal, white. **Fruit:** berrylike (drupe), drooping on pedicel with spreading, reddish perianth and persistent filaments, 1-seeded, ovoid-subspheroid,  $3.5\text{--}4 \times 3.5\text{--}4.5$  mm, glossy orange-red (scarlet), with short, diagonal beak (persistent style) at top, having groove on 2 sides from base to top; pulp (mesocarp) juicy, orange to reddish orange (scarlet); endocarp fibrous and hairlike adherent to seed coat and appearing netlike (visible through skin); sepals to 4 mm long, appearing somewhat reflexed when fruit dries. **Seed:** stonelike,  $\pm$  oval in outline and thick lens-shaped, ca.  $3 \times 3 \times 1.5$  mm, blackish with fibrous light brown cover (endocarp) concealing most of the surface, the surface ridged along raphe and forming an elaborate, netlike ridged with conspicuous, craterlike depressions and ultimate surface with minute gaps showing black seed coat.

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