

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Sabatia campestris – PRAIRIE ROSE-GENTIAN, FALSE-GENTIAN [Gentianaceae]

Sabatia campestris Nutt., PRAIRIE ROSE-GENTIAN, FALSE-GENTIAN. Annual, taprooted, ± not rosetted, 1-stemmed at base, canopy of ascending branches each with a terminal inflorescence, erect, in range 5–20 cm tall; shoots with several short-lived basal leaves and with persistent cauline leaves, glabrous and totally lacking glandular hairs; latex cloudy. **Stems:** 4-sided and 4-ridged (short-winged), 0.4–2.5 mm diameter, on each internode 2 ridges descending from each leaf and terminating at next node, tough, light green, principal lower stem forming periderm. **Leaves:** opposite decussate (rarely on diminutive plant the earliest, small leaves in whorls of 3), simple (1–2 lobes near midblade), sessile, without stipules; blade ovate to elliptic, 3.5–25 × 2–7 mm (unlobed), dull, entire, acute to obtuse or rounded at tip, pinnately veined with midrib raised on lower surface. **Inflorescence:** cyme, terminal, open, several-flowered, with only 1 branch at each node, bracteate, glabrous; bracts subtending cymes and bractlets subtending flowers in pairs, leaflike, decreasing upward; peduncle ascending, stemlike; pedicel suberect to ascending, stemlike and 4-ridged but 5-ridged approaching flower, at anthesis to 20 mm long increasing to 2× in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, in range (11–)22–33 mm across; **calyx** 5–6(–7)-lobed; tube vase-shaped, 1.5–5.5 × 1.2–4 mm, conspicuously 5-ridged with ridges green and faces membranous and later stressed, 10-veined, ridges descending from sinuses and upper pedicel; lobes appressed to corolla lobes, narrowly triangular, 3–9 mm long, 1.2–2.5 mm wide and (1–)3-veined at base, green, minutely bumpy on margins, acute at tip, persistent; **corolla** (4–)5(–6)-lobed, short trumpet-shaped with conspicuous horizontal lobes, lobes twisted in bud; tube membranous and vase-shaped (conforming to ovary), 2–5 mm long, to 3 mm wide at orifice, colorless, delicate and stretched with ovary expansion, 10-ribbed above with principal veins beneath each calyx lobe; throat short; lobes overlapping at base, broadly obovate to oblong, 6.8–16 × 3.5–10.5 mm, in range dark rose (dark pink), the white area and bright greenish yellow arms of adjacent lobes and upper throat forming a pentagonal (4–6) center with points at midlobes or creating a pentafoil, arms to 4 mm long, paler and somewhat glossy on lower surface, (3–)5-veined at base; **stamens** (4–)5(–6), fused to base of corolla throat at sinuses alternate with corolla lobes, exerted; filaments 2–4.2 mm long, white and rose above midpoint, glabrous; anthers basifixed, dithecal tapered to tip, (1.5–)2.2–4 mm, bright yellow, longitudinally dehiscent not tightly helically twisted after dehiscence; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1, mostly 12(–16) mm long (rarely 2 mm long without a long style and apparently sterile), exerted 1–2 mm above stamens; ovary superior, obovoid, to 3.5 × 2 mm, green, glabrous, 1-chambered with 4 placentae intruding with numerous ovules; style mostly 8.5–12 mm long, 2-branched ca. 3 mm from base, white from base to green at fork, the branches narrowly oblong twisted together, green, when twisted inrolled and appearing channeled, papillate on upper (inner) surface. **Fruit:** capsule, septicidal, dehiscent by 2 valves, many-seeded, subspheroid, ca. 5 × 4.5 mm; at maturity except top concealed by calyx tube and spreading lobes, with corolla tube stretched and papery on surface and with ascending dry corolla lobes and often dry filaments. **Seed:** roundish to D-shaped, 0.3–0.35 mm long, brown, conspicuously netlike.

A. C. Gibson