

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Sida spinosa – PRICKLY MALLOW, SPINY SIDA [Malvaceae]

Sida spinosa L., PRICKLY MALLOW, SPINY SIDA. Annual, taprooted, not rosetted, 1-stemmed at base, with ascending (spreading) lateral branches along principal axis from successive nodes, ascending to erect, to 60 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, leaves widely spaced, short stellate-hairs with arms mostly < 0.25 mm long and having some unbranched hairs. **Stems:** cylindrical, to 5.5 mm diameter, tough, green, internode > petiole, stellate hairs having to 10 ascending to spreading arms, lower stem forming periderm. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, attached at base and ± persistent, ascending, linear, 3–5 mm long, green, short stellate-hairy, drying from tip downward (not abscised); petiole at base broad and deltate often with a short bump (“spine”) < 0.5 mm long just below narrower channeled axis, axis 3.5–25 mm long, > petiole, tough, short stellate-hairy; blade narrowly ovate to oblong, 14–45 × 2–15 mm, dull, truncate to subcordate or broadly tapered at base, crenate on margins with 25+ teeth per blade and often purplish on margins, having acute tooth at tip, palmately veined with to 7 principal veins at base slightly sunken on upper surface and raised on lower surface, surfaces dull and minutely textured, short stellate-hairy but scattered hairs along veins to 0.4 mm long. lower surface minutely bumpy and grayish. **Inflorescence:** cyme, axillary, 1–several-flowered, bracteate, green surfaces densely short stellate-hairy; bractlet subtending first pedicel = cauline leaf including stipules, pedicel 5.5–7 mm long and < petiole; bractlet of sequential flowers diminutive leaflike including stipules and pedicels decreasing upward and not increasing in fruit, green or aging purplish, with pulvinus at top immediately beneath horizontal flower, in fruit pedicel widely spreading sharply bent at pulvinus making fruit oriented horizontal, densely stellate-hairy; lacking bracteoles at top of pedicel (no epicalyx). **Flower:** bisexual, radial, ca. 6 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, 5.5–7 mm long not increasing in fruit, outer (lower) surface densely covered with short stellate hairs and some unbranched hairs; tube broadly funnel-shaped stretching somewhat in fruit, 10-veined the 5 to sinuses = ribs and purplish red, inner surface glabrous; lobes ascending, deltate, < tube, later leaning inward concealing fruit, 3-veined, margins purple-red, approaching tip inner surface with short hairs having few arms or unbranched; **petals** 5, fused to base of staminal column, twisted in bud, at anthesis ascending, asymmetric, clawed, claw developing just before anthesis, to 3 mm long, 1 mm wide, limb ca. 5 × 4 mm eccentric and longer on right half, pale yellow and limb with ca. 7 rose radiating veins from base, aging light orange-yellow, outer margin minutely ciliate with colorless glandular, papillate hairs; **stamens** ca. 20, monadelphous (fused into a column), included; column of fused filaments surrounding style and also fused to petals at base, treelike, ca. 2.5 mm long, erect cylindrical column 0.25 mm diameter, light orange-yellow, upper portion with scattered, radiating glandular short hairs; free filaments arising from top of column on unequally forked branchlets, spreading, < 1.5 mm long, light orange-yellow; anthers dorsifixed, monotheical, ca. 0.4 mm long, orange-yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow-orange; **pistil** 1, included; ovary superior, hidden beneath staminal column, inversely top-shaped conspicuously 5-lobed, 1 × 1 mm, light green, at top with depressed center, with 5 pairs of short acute horns at top in rings around depressed center, glabrous to above midpoint and with mostly short, unbranched hairs above midpoint, 5-chambered, each chamber with 1 ovule; style in depressed center of ovary, exerted, ca. 5 mm long,

greenish below and becoming orangish above, 5-branched 1 mm above ovary, the branches ca. 3 and approaching top of staminal column curved and spreading; stigmas terminal, capitate, hemispheroid, reddish, short-papillate. **Fruit:** schizocarp, of 5 dry, 1-seeded mericarps, before splitting conspicuously 5-lobed and broadly ovoid, ca. 4 × 4 mm including a ring of 10 acute, inward-facing horns; mericarp dehiscent somewhat dehiscent between horns but releasing seed by breaking irregularly below midpoint, 3-sided wedgelike having a pair of short horns at top, ca. 4 × 1.5 mm, brown, back rounded, glabrous to above midpoint and puberulent above including pair of horns with mostly unbranched hairs; calyx stretched by developing fruit, lobes to 3.5 mm wide. **Seed:** 3-sided, ca. 1.5 mm long, dull dark brown, rounded on back often with fine midline.

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