

**Vascular Plants of Williamson County**  
*Trifolium incarnatum* – CRIMSON CLOVER [Fabaceae]

*Trifolium incarnatum* L., CRIMSON CLOVER. Annual, taprooted, several-stemmed at base, ascending, in range < 45 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, conspicuously soft-hairy; roots nodulated. **Stems:** cylindric, to 3 mm diameter, tough, villous often appressed with upward-pointing hairs. **Leaves:** helically alternate, 3-foliolate, petiolate without pulvinus, with stipules; stipules 2, closed-sheathing and fused to stem at node and to base of petiole, wing oblong to ovate, 12–15 mm long, membranous and strongly green-veined (white-veined), closed ca. 4 mm, lacking teeth and lobes on margin, lobe deltate and tip never bristlelike, densely pilose especially along veins; petiole ± cylindric and channeled, to 110 mm long, ≥ leaflet at node, lacking pulvinus; petiolules = pulvinus, 0.5–1 mm long, greenish; blades of leaflets obovate to shallowly heart-shaped or fan-shaped, 12–27 × 15–28 mm, flat, tapered at base, entire or inconspicuously short-dentate above midpoint, shallowly notched or truncate at tip, pinnately veined with midrib raised on lower surface, dull, pilose. **Inflorescence:** headlike raceme, terminal, ± erect, cylindric to narrowly conic, at anthesis at least 25 mm long increasing to 60 × 15–20 mm in fruit and appearing like a fuzzy caterpillar, many-flowered, flowers whorled, 5 flowers per whorl and 5–6 whorls per 10 mm in fruit, at anthesis flowers erect to ascending, lacking bracts, hirsute-villous; peduncle to 35 mm long; **involucre** of bractlets subtending raceme absent; rachis 5-ridged, white, short-villous; bractlet subtending pedicel absent; pedicel < 1 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, pealike (papilionaceous), 2 mm across; **nectary** nectar-producing receptacle below ovary; **calyx** 5-lobed, 6–7 mm long, villous; tube bell-shaped, ca. 2 × 1.2 mm, membranous strongly 10-veined, veins raised and green; lobes long-acuminate, slightly longer on lower side, becoming bristlelike in fruit; **petals** 5; banner folded forward, lacking claw, elliptic folded from midline, 8–11.5 × 2.5 mm, in range rose-red on exposed portion and white within calyx; wings 2, ⊥ to banner and locked with keel, clawed, the claws slender, ca. 1.3 mm long, white, limbs ± elliptic with backward-pointing basal lobe, 4 mm shorter than banner, rose-red but lobe white, glabrous; keel of 2 petals fused at midpoint on lower edge and cupped upward, < wings, clawed, the claws white, fused portion darker red than wings; **stamens** 10, diadelphous (9 filament fused and 1 free), alternating short and longer; filament sheet ± straight, ca. 1 mm long, translucent-white, filament free portions to 1.5 mm long, white; anthers dorsifixed near base of anther, dithecal, 0.25–0.35 mm long, pale yellow-orange, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow-orange; **pistil** 1, not stalked; ovary superior, asymmetrically compressed-obovoid, 1 mm long, green, with narrowly conic point, pubescent, 1-chambered with 2 ovules attached to upper side; style ca. 2 mm long, lower portion whitish and exerted portion yellowish and curved upward; stigma capitate, minute. **Fruit:** pod (legume), indehiscent or irregularly rupturing at tip, 1-seeded, ellipsoid, ca. 3 × 2 mm, membranous aging papery with thin wall tightly appressed to seed, hirsute; dispersed as unit enclosed by expanded calyx tube having 10 fibrous veins. **Seed:** ellipsoid slightly compressed, ± 2 × 1.5 mm, ± dull tan to ivory-colored, smooth.

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