

Vascular Plants of Williamson County

Verbena xutha – COARSE VERVAIN, GULF VERVAIN [Verbenaceae]

Verbena xutha Lehm., COARSE VERVAIN, GULF VERVAIN. Perennial herb, 1–several-stemmed at base, ascending, in range to 85 cm tall; shoots with cauline leaves; hispid-hirsute with the larger hairs having swollen bases (pustulate) and short glandular hairs with colorless heads. **Stems:** 4-sided, to 5 mm diameter, 2 sides flat and 2 somewhat rounded. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, mostly 3-lobed, sessile to subsessile, without stipules; blade deeply cut usually with a pair of opposite, minor lateral lobes within 20 mm of base, long-tapered at base, toothed on margins, acute at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins sunken on upper surface and conspicuously raised on lower surface. **Inflorescence:** spike, terminal and axillary in canopy, 50+-flowered, flowers helically alternate but subopposite at base, unevenly spaced along rachis, hispid-hirsute with the largest hairs pustulate, also with short glandular hairs; peduncle ridged, < 15 mm long; rachis ridged, with 1 ridge descending from each bractlet; bractlet subtending flower awl-shaped, ca. 4 mm long but not reaching tip of calyx, green, short-hirsute; bracteole subtending flower threadlike, ca. 1.5 mm long, colorless, short-hairy. **Flower:** bisexual, ± radial, ca. 7 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, ca. 3.5 mm long with free tips; tube keeled, 3 mm long, membranous with green ridges; **corolla** 5-lobed, ± trumpet-shaped but limb bent downward from perpendicular; tube ± cylindric, ca. 3 × 0.7–0.9 mm, white, glabrous on outer surface, with short radiating hairs inside from midpoint to top below filaments; throat lower portion 1.7–2 × 1.2 mm, light purple, having hairs on outer surface, upper portion broadly funnel-shaped, orifice blocked by a ring of stiff, pale lavender, inward-leaning hairs to 0.5 mm long concealing anthers and stigma; lobes subequal, widely spreading, truncate to inconspicuously or shallowly notched, 1.5–2 × 1.5–2 mm, light purple to lavender, having stiff short hairs on both surfaces; **stamens** 4, pairs attached to top of corolla tube at levels 1 mm and 0.6 mm below ring of hairs, included; filaments curved, 0.4 mm long, white; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.4 mm long, light yellow, longitudinally and inwardly dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **nectary disc** covering lower third of ovary, light green, nectar-producing; **pistil** 1, 2.2 mm long, included; ovary superior, shallowly 4-lobed, 0.8 × 0.4 mm, green, glabrous, ; style cylindric but flattened approaching top, 1.2–1.4 mm long, light green, glabrous, unequally 2-branched, terminal stigmatic branch hemispheric, colorless, flanked by short branch. **Fruit:** schizocarp (microbasarium), of 1–4 dry, 1-seeded mericarps (nutlets), mericarps oblong, 1.7–2 × 0.6–0.7 mm, satiny brown, rounded back with longitudinal ridges and depressions, fertile and undeveloped mericarps strongly coherent.

A. C. Gibson