

Vascular Plants of Williamson County
Zeltnera texense – LADY BIRD CENTAURY [Gentianaceae]

Zeltnera texense (Griseb.) G. Mans., LADY BIRD CENTAURY. Annual, slender-taprooted, not rosetted, 1-stemmed at base, with a branched, terminal inflorescence from below midplant, erect, 7–20 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, glabrous. **Stems:** 4-ridged and 4-sided, 2 faces somewhat convex below leaves, 2 faces flat, with ridges descending from ledge (not leaf), internodes to 20 mm long. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, sessile with pair forming ledges across node, without stipules; blade linear or linear-lanceolate to narrowly elliptic or obovate, $< 6-25(-33) \times 1-4(-7)$ mm, entire, acute at tip, 1-veined. **Inflorescence:** compound cyme, terminal and sometimes axillary, open, many-flowered, bracteate, glabrous; bracts subtending cymes in pairs, leaflike, decreasing upward; peduncle erect (suberect if axillary), stemlike; bractlet subtending pedicel elliptic-linear, $4-6 \times 0.6-0.7$ mm; pedicel suberect to ascending, stemlike, 4-ridged and 4-sided, at anthesis $< 4-6$ mm long not increasing in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, in range 7.5–13 mm across; **calyx** 4–6-lobed, $7-9 \times 1.3-1.5$ mm, green, glabrous; tube ca. 1 mm long; lobes subequal, linear, keeled; **corolla** 4–6-lobed, 11–14 mm long; tube + throat exerted < 1 mm above calyx (constriction), white, tube ribbed and obvious in fruit (ca. 20-ribbed); throat short funnel-shaped, 1.2–1.4 mm across at orifice; lobes widely spreading, \pm elliptic to obovate, $3.8-6 \times 1-2.6$ mm, rose, pink, to pale pink (white), paler on lower surface, often minutely notched at tip or remotely toothed; **stamens** 4–6, fused to base of corolla throat and decurrent inside upper corolla tube (yellowish), alternate with corolla lobes, exerted; filaments straight, 2.1–2.6 mm long, white (yellowish at base), glabrous; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 2–2.2 mm long, light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **pistil** 1, 13–14 mm long, exerted; ovary superior, cylindrical, ca. $7.5 \times 0.8-0.9$ mm, glossy solid green. 1-chambered and longitudinally grooved over each placenta, the 2 placenta intruding with numerous ovules; style ca. 4.5 mm long (including stigma lobes), 2(–3)-branched, 2-channeled approaching stigma, white, the stigmatic branches oval to roundish, 0.7 mm long, cream-colored, papillate. **Fruit:** capsule, septicidal, dehiscent by 2 valves, many-seeded, narrowly fusiform, 8–9 mm long, golden brown, dehiscing below midpoint with tips of valves spreading. **Seed:** ovoid, 0.3–0.4 mm long, charcoal, conspicuously netlike and ridged.

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