

Allium L. ONION, GARLIC

Allium haematochiton S. Watson, REDSKIN ONION. Perennial herb, geophytic, clonal, bulb-bearing on short rhizome, fibrous-rooted, rosetted and cespitose, acaulous, scapose, 10–40 cm tall; shoots with a dense tuft of basal, fleshy leaves, 3–5 leaves per shoot (bulb), glabrous, with strong onion odor; bulb \pm lanceoloid, 20–30 \times 8–12 mm, fleshy, outer layers dry and papery, brownish to grayish brown and vertically veined and striped, cinnamon brown to reddish inward, eventually whitish next to fleshy layers, the stripes fine and straight or slightly wavy. **Stems (scapes):** \pm cylindrical but with 2 inconspicuous longitudinal ridges, 2–4.5 mm thick above sheath base, light green and glaucous, white belowground. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple and sheathing; sheath closed, to 110 mm long, extending slightly above soil level, colorless; blade linear, 100–300 \times 2–5 mm, withering backwards from the tip, in \times -section hemi-cylindric to crescent-shaped, entire, parallel-veined. **Inflorescence:** umbel, terminal on scape, hemispheric, in range 20–30-flowered, with many flowers open at the same time, bracteate, glabrous; bracts subtending umbel and initially covering emerging buds 2–4, alternate distichous, scarious, ovate-deltate to lanceolate, 7–10 mm long, whitish aging pinkish brown or reddish, fused at base and conspicuously swollen and somewhat compressed, obtuse to broadly acute at tip, often with 2 or 3 dark principal veins; bractlet subtending pedicel scarious, lanceolate to acuminate or tail-like from triangular base (caudate), 1.5–4 mm long; pedicel ascending, at maturity 8–16 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 8–16 mm across, dish-shaped; **tepals** 6, \pm free (united by fused stamen bases), \pm monomorphic, spreading, ovate, in range 7.4–8 \times 4–4.4 mm, white or blushed with pink (especially below midpoint), on lower surface with greenish midstripe only at base and rose-red to brownish approaching tip; **stamens** 6, each fused 0.5–1 mm at base to tepal and also adjacent filaments; filaments subequal, with fused, swollen bases, ascending, tapered, free portion 4.5–5.5 mm long, white; anthers \pm versatile, dithecal, oblong, 1.6–1.8 \times 0.8–1 mm, yellow, cordate at base, obtuse to rounded at tip, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **nectary** beneath ovary and concealed by stamen bases, green, producing copious nectar; **pistil** 1, \pm 6 mm long; ovary superior, 3-lobed with each lobe 2-ridged, 1.5–1.7 \times 2.5–2.7 mm, whitish, pebbled, developing 2 crests on each ridge, the crests papillate and often rose-colored, 3-chambered, each chamber with 2 ovules attached to center; style arising about midpoint of ovary chambers, 5–5.5 mm long, white, with basal 0.7 mm concealed by ovary; stigma terminal, narrow, unlobed. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 3 valves, 6-seeded, strongly 6-lobed heart-shaped, ca. 3 \times 4 mm, tannish, concealed by persistent, papery perianth. **Seed:** irregularly obovoid, 1.8–2.3 \times \pm 1.6 mm, satiny black, somewhat honeycombed with conspicuous winglike ridges and sunken areas, minutely roughened (cell contours). Late January–late May.

Native. Geophytic perennial herb relatively common in thin, rocky soil on exposed, dry rocky slopes and ridges in chaparral. *Allium haematochiton* forms upright tufts of leaves following winter rains, and in dry years this species is more difficult to find. Each clone develops from a cluster of bulbs, which are tightly buried next to rocks. The umbel has crowded flowers with many open per day. The perianth changes from white with a reddish midstripe, ages rose, and then becomes papery and colorless while persisting and eventually concealing the fruits.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson