

Amaranthus L. AMARANTH, PIGWEED

Amaranthus deflexus L., LARGE-FRUIT AMARANTH, ARGENTINE AMARANTH, DEFLEXED AMARANTH, LOW AMARANTH. Annual or short-lived perennial herb, taprooted, many-stemmed at base, with branches to 80 cm long, procumbent to decumbent, to 35 cm tall; monoecious; shoots sparsely or densely tomentose on young growth becoming mostly sparsely pubescent with kinky-crisped hairs. **Stems:** irregularly ridged, to 4 mm diameter, with 2 ridges descending from each leaf, initially greenish but soon becoming rose-colored, streaked with paler veins and sometimes with whitish flecks (crystals), with sparse, kinky hairs. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole channeled, 6–36 mm long; blade rhombic-ovate to ovate, 10–55 × (5–)10–30 mm, tapered to broadly tapered at base, transparent and ± entire at planar or wavy margins, acute or obtuse to shallowly notched at tip commonly with a colorless midrib extension, pinnately veined with principal veins sunken on upper surface and raised on lower surface, upper surface becoming glabrescent, lower surface paler green to light bluish green, pubescent, veins with whitish crystal flecks. **Inflorescences:** panicles of short, highly condensed cymes of unisexual flowers (cymules), erect, terminal and axillary, including spikelike clusters scattered throughout the plant, of mostly pistillate flowers with some staminate flowers at tip of inflorescence branchlets, panicles narrowly conic, bracteate, with sparse, kinky hairs; bractlet subtending pistillate flower triangular, ca. 1.2 × 0.8–1 mm. **Staminate flower:** ± radial, ca. 1 mm across; **tepals** (perianth parts) 2(–3), subequal, narrowly elliptic or oblanceolate, 1–1.5 × 0.3–0.6 mm, broadly acute to acuminate at tip, mostly membranous and translucent whitish but with a green midstripe aging reddish; **stamens** 2(–3), free; filaments to 1.3 mm long, light translucent-yellow; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.5–0.6 mm long, light yellow to yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **pistil** absent. **Pistillate flower:** 1 mm across; **tepals** (perianth parts) 2, unequal, narrowly elliptic to oblanceolate, 0.7–1.2 mm long, subequal and 1.5–2 mm long in fruit, persistent on fruit base; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, compressed-ovoid, ± 0.75–1.5 mm long, beaked, mostly greenish but grading to dark red at tip of beak, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 3, ascending, ± 0.5 mm long, conically thickened at base, stigmatic and papillate base to tip. **Fruit:** utricle, indehiscent, 1-seeded, slightly compressed-ellipsoid to compressed-ovoid, 2.4–3 × 1.4–1.7 mm, slightly to distinctly inflated with seed at base, wall leathery, 2–3-veined at tip, with persistent styles. **Seed:** ellipsoid or ellipsoid-ovoid, 1.1–1.2 × 0.8–0.9 mm, glossy reddish brown marginally, dark brown–blackish centrally, smooth. Late May–late September.

Naturalized. An infrequently encountered, weedy herb of waste places along roads and sidewalks in the southern portion of SMM. *Amaranthus deflexus* is low-growing with branches spreading from the base. Its staminate and pistillate flowers are produced mostly in dense, terminal panicles, with the staminate flowers clustered at the tips.

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