

SAURURACEAE, THE LIZARD'S-TAIL FAMILY

Anemopsis Hooker & Arnott

Anemopsis californica (Nutt.) Hooker & Arnott, YERBA MANSA. Aquatic perennial herb with emergent leaves, rhizomatous, stolon-bearing, rosetted with large basal leaves, flowering shoots erect to ascending, to 75 cm tall; shoots with ascending basal leaves and cauline leaves, typically long soft-hairy, the hairs scattered, colorless, 1–3 mm long, each multicellular arranged in a single stack with a constriction between each cell, spicy-aromatic; rhizome creeping and relatively deep-seated, thick, woody. **Stems:** cylindrical, often 4–6 mm in diameter, ± fleshy, solid when fresh, flexible, with a long first internode (to 600 mm), light green but at base initially white, becoming rose-tinted, hairy (glabrous); solid (drying hollow). **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, long-petiolate, without stipules; petiole of basal leaf occasionally > 400 mm long, petiole > blade, petiole of cauline leaves < blade, long-hairy like stem (glabrous), U-shaped and sheathing at base, becoming shallowly channeled above or becoming cylindrical at midpoint of the longest petioles, thicker than stem; blade of basal leaves elliptic-oblong to broadly spatulate, 70–280 × 40–150 mm, truncate to cordate at base, entire + sparsely ciliate on basal margin, acute to obtuse at tip, pinnately veined, dull green or often gray-green and glaucous if in full sun, mostly glabrous but on lower surface long hairy on basal part of midrib (sometimes puberulent or pubescent with most hairs on lower surface); blade of cauline leaves in axil of bract subtending peduncle, similar in shape as basal leaves but smaller, 40–115 × 25–65 mm. **Inflorescence:** spike, terminal, conelike, 100–200-flowered, 15–50 × 15 mm, subtended by 5–8 involucre bracts, on long peduncle, glabrous; bract subtending peduncle sessile and clasping, leaflike, ovate to narrowly heart-shaped, 30–60 × 15–30 mm, ciliate on margins except at tip, glabrous except sometimes long-hairy on lower surface near base, sometimes splitting at base along midrib caused by growth of axillary leaves; peduncle 60–170 mm long; **involucre** of petal-like bracts, bracts oblong with rounded tips, 10–45 × 7–21 mm, white often becoming blotched deep rose, glabrous; bractlet subtending each flower spatulate and often cupped, 3–6 × 1–2.5 mm, white aging deep rose. **Flower:** bisexual, ± radial with some upper and lower side differences, embedded in inflorescence axis, 3–4 mm across, pleasantly fragrant; **perianth** absent; **stamens** 6, fused to ovary; filaments, short, broadly conic, green; anthers erect, dithecal, 1.5 mm long, yellow with reddish connective, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1, of 3 1-chambered units ± fused at base; ovary inferior, ± 3 mm long, with base embedded in axis, each chamber with (4–)8–11 ovules; styles 3, tentaclelike, 3–4 mm long, grooved on lower side. **Fruit:** capsule, dehiscent from tip downward, in range 1-seeded per chamber, 5–7 mm long, brown. **Seed:** ellipsoid or ± barrel-shaped, ca. 1 mm × 0.7 mm, orange-brown, concave around hilum, sometimes ± truncate at tip, netlike to ladderlike on surface. Late April–early August.

Native. Clonal aquatic perennial of wet creek banks and ever-wet cienegas at a limited number of sites throughout the range. *Anemopsis californica*, yerba mansa, is one of our

most interesting species in flower during late spring, having its conelike spike of flowers subtended by a large white bract that can become blotched deep rose.

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