

Astragalus L. MILKVETCH

Astragalus pycnostachyus A. Gray var. *lanosissimus* (Rydb.) Munz & McBurney, VENTURA MARSH MILKVETCH. Perennial, shrublike, taprooted, several-many-stemmed at base from a shallowly buried root crown, with ascending to erect branches, to 120 cm tall; shoots grayish green, densely tomentose with white, shaggy hairs, not woolly. **Stems:** ridged, of branches to 10 mm diameter, with 9 ridges (different heights) descending from each leaf and associated stipules, tough, green, with scattered crooked hairs; lower stem hollow within woody cylinder. **Leaves:** helically alternate, odd-1-pinnately compound with (7-)13-15 pairs of opposite lateral leaflets, petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, attached to petiole and to stem, ± reflexed, long-acuminate, 5-6 mm long, broad at base, not having inrolled margins, exposed (upper) surface green and glabrous with membranous margins, ridges and lower surface without brown hairs; petiole short-6 mm long; rachis to 75 mm long, densely tomentose; petiolules ≤ 1 mm long, light green; blade broadly lanceolate in outline, 50-90 × 25-40 mm; blades of lateral leaflets elliptic (oblong), 7-23 × 2.5-7 mm, the largest at base decreasing to tip, entire, ± rounded without a short tooth at tip, terminal leaflet obovate, < 7 mm long, without a notch at tip, pinnately veined with midrib raised on lower surface. **Inflorescence:** raceme, axillary, < leaf, 40-50-flowered, bracteate, white-tomentose; peduncle 15-22 mm long, rachis to 70 mm long; bractlet acuminate, 1.5-2 mm long, greenish with membranous margins, persistent; pedicel at anthesis ascending and straight, 0.7-1.2 mm long increasing 2× in fruit, sometimes purplish red, aging arching, white-tomentose. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, pealike (papilionaceous), 4.5-5 mm across, 9-10 mm long; **calyx** 5-lobed (toothed), 5.5-6 mm long, tomentose, sometimes including scattered brownish hairs; tube bell-shaped, 3.7-4.5 × 2.2-3 mm, pale green but darker green at base, not turning reddish; lobes equal, triangular to acuminate, 0.8-1.5 mm long, green; **petals** 5, light yellow maturing cream-colored, persisting withered; banner obovate, 10-11 × 5.5-6 mm, rounded and shallowly notched at tip, erect above midpoint and ± recurved on upper margins, creamy white at base, cream-colored to pale yellow above, with faint veins extending into central area; wings 2, clawed, ± oblanceolate, 8.5-9 × ± 2.7 mm, claw 4.5-5 mm long, limb obovate with a backward-pointing and inward-pointing lobe ± 0.5 mm long and locking with dimple in keel; keel of 2 petals fused base to tip, 6.7-8 mm long including a narrowly wedged-shaped claw 4 mm long, whitish, pair of dimples in front of backward-pointing lobes; **stamens** 10, diadelphous (9 filaments fused and 1 free); filaments 6.3-8.5 mm long, pale green, gently curved upward 90° approaching keel tip, free portion 1.2-1.7 mm long; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, ellipsoid to lanceoloid, 0.4-0.6 mm long, yellow-orange, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow-orange, copious, sticky; **pistil** 1, 8 mm long; ovary superior, ellipsoid, ± 1.5 mm long, green, glabrous, 1-chambered with 6-8 ovules along 2 placentae attached to upper side; style upwardly arching, white, glabrous; stigma capitate, yellow-green. **Fruit:** pod (legume), indehiscent, several-seeded, subspheroid, 4-6.5 mm long, glabrous to thinly short-strigose. **Seed:** irregularly kidney-shaped, 2-2.5 × 1.8-2.2 mm, dull greenish brown to olive green. Late June-late August.

Native. Listed subspecies. Short-lived "shrub" currently known only from a tiny population near McGrath State Beach in Ventura County, approximately twenty kilometers

WNW of range, but in 1904 collected at “Cienega,” earlier in Santa Monica, and probably originally present in SMM, and possibly is still here. *Astragalus pycnostachyus* var. *lanosissimus* was presumed extinct before the Ventura population was rediscovered in the last decade. This hairy shrub superficially resembles the listed *A. brauntonii*, but has instead light yellow to cream-colored flowers. If encountered in range, no materials of this protected species should be collected, and the sighting should be reported immediately to a park representative.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson