

*Bassia* All.

*Bassia hyssopifolia* (Pallas) Kuntze, FIVE-HORN BASSIA, FIVEHOOF BASSIA. Annual, sometimes halophytic, taprooted, many-stemmed at base, often hemispheric, branched throughout with many short lateral flowering shoots, erect to ascending or prostrate, 5–100 cm tall; shoots somewhat fleshy, green to bluish green, initially densely soft-hairy. **Stems:** cylindrical, green to yellow-green often tinged pink or reddish on younger stems, tough, tomentose on younger growth, with scattered soft hairs or glabrescent on older stems. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, sessile, without stipules; petiole in range typically < 0.5 mm long; blade flat-linear to narrowly lanceolate or oblanceolate, 4–55(–85) × 1–4.5(–10) mm at plant base to < 15 × 1–2 mm in canopy, grading into shorter bracts of inflorescence, ± fleshy, entire, acute to obtuse at tip, venation obscure to 3-veined or 5-veined, densely to sparsely pilose or becoming glabrate at maturity, somewhat glaucous. **Inflorescence:** leafy spike, terminal, elongated on ends of principal branches and condensed on short lateral shoots, many-flowered with bisexual and pistillate flowers in clusters of 2–3 sessile flowers, bracteate; bract subtending flower cluster leaflike, ovate or lanceolate to lanceolate-elliptic, 1.5–5 mm long, conspicuously pilose; bractlet subtending each flower absent. **Flowers:** bisexual and pistillate (similar but lacking stamens), radial, 1.5–2 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed; base dishlike, light green, pilose; lobes arching over and clasping ovary, cupped-ovate, ca. 1 mm long, green with white-membranous margins, densely pilose on margins, sparsely pilose on fleshy central area, each with a flasklike projection at base, the projections later elongating as 5 long arms each with a upwardly curved hook, the arms 1.5–2 mm long, light green becoming rigid and nongreen with reddish hook; **petals** absent; **stamens** 5 (bisexual flowers), fused together at base; filaments opposite calyx lobes, tapered, elongating to 2 mm, flat; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, ± 0.8 mm long, pale yellow turning reddish with age, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, horizontal depressed-ovoid, ± 1 mm diameter, green, glabrous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; style < 0.5 mm long; stigmas 2(3), 1–2 mm long, whitish or red, densely hairy. **Fruit:** utricle, horizontal depressed-ovoid, membranous; calyx persistent with 5 hooked arms (spines). **Seed:** lenticular, 1–1.5 mm diameter, dark brown. Late May–late September.

Naturalized. A nonshowy annual of disturbed ground occurring near the coast and on the westernmost margin of the range. The fruit has 5-hooked arms, making *Bassia hyssopifolia* unique in range, and easy to identify if the plant is old enough to find the hooks. However, individual plants vary from having narrow, linear to lanceolate leaves, which may be bluish green to green, even within a single population, so without fruits there is much uncertainty about proper identification.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson