

Calochortus Pursh MARIPOSA LILY

Calochortus plummerae Greene, PLUMMER'S MARIPOSA LILY. Perennial herb, geophytic, bulb-bearing, fibrous-rooted, 1-stemmed at base, typically branched above, erect, 30–100 cm tall; shoot with 1 basal leaf and several cauline leaves, the basal leaf withered by flowering, glabrous; bulb coat fibrous. **Stems:** cylindric, to 5 mm diameter but only 2.5 mm at ground level, brownish most of length becoming dark red at base, greenish below flowers, internodes 40–300 mm long. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, simple with sheath; sheath closed but forming a long V on the lowest leaf; blade of basal leaf to 700 × 11 mm but withering at tip while growing at base, often inrolled on margins, conspicuously parallel-veined; blade of cauline leaves linear, 100–400 × to 11 mm, reduced upward, flat becoming cylindric-inrolled, entire, colorless on margins to 15 mm from base, long-tapered at tip, conspicuously parallel-veined. **Inflorescence:** cyme, terminal and axillary, open, typically 2–6-flowered, with erect flowers, bracteate, glabrous; bractlet subtending pedicel leaflike, to 50 mm long; pedicel at anthesis 40–60 mm long increasing in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 45–70 mm across, broadly bell-shaped; **sepals** 3, long-acuminate, 30–50 × 5–8 mm, boat-shaped with upturned margins, outer (lower) surface green with green parallel veins becoming purple-tinged on margins and above midpoint, broadly and asymmetrically membranous at basal margins, narrowly membranous on margins above midpoint; inner (upper) surface reddish purple except whitish around base or by a patch of 10–40 hairs near base, with several scattered hairs below midpoint, the hairs dark yellow with purplish at base and tip; **petals** 3, ascending, broadly fan-shaped, 28–50 × (20–)25–54 mm, nectar-producing and bearded on inner surface, 3-colored with deep reddish purple spot at base, a creamy white middle band, and a rose lavender to light purple upper band, jagged-dentate on outer margin and sometimes ciliate, the hairs on inner surface thick and ca. 4 mm long, the hairs of middle band yellow with purplish base and tip, the hairs of upper band purple; **nectary gland** above basal purple spot, slightly depressed and circular, 2.5–3.5 mm long, naked or nearly so, densely bordered with a ring of yellow-fringed scales and hairs converging over gland and obscure it; **stamens** 6, free, ascending; filaments appressed to ovary most of length, gradually tapered to tip, 9–13.5 mm long, whitish to pale lavender, flaring outward at tip; anthers erect, basifixed, dithecal, narrowly lanceolate, 10–18.5 × 2.5–3.3 mm, yellowish pink, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pinkish orange; **pistil** 1, 24–44 mm long; ovary superior, linear and 3-angled with 3 deep grooves, 24–43 × 2–4 mm, conspicuously glaucous, reddish purple mottled below wax, 3-chambered, each chamber with numerous ovules in 2 rows attached to center; style absent or ill-defined; stigma 3-lobed, spreading and arching downward and becoming crozier-shaped, 2–4.5 mm long, green below, purplish on upper edge and tip, minutely papillate-hairy on upper edge. **Fruit:** capsule, septicidal later loculicidal, erect, many-seeded with 2 stacks per chamber, linear and 3-angled, (40–)65–85 mm long, before dehiscent 8–12 mm wide, straw-colored, valves erect with long-tapered tips. **Seed:** elliptic and flattened top-to-bottom, 4–6 × 2–3.5 mm, tan, top and bottom faces sunken and rimmed by side wall, side wall ⊥ or slanted and unequal around seed, 0.3–1 mm tall, faces with minutely raised network, sometimes with low parallel ribs. Late April–early August.

Native. Geophytic perennial herb having small, isolated populations in rocky soils of coastal sage scrub or chaparral. *Calochortus plummerae* flowers after the rainy season and

therefore is blooming when most herbs have died or become dormant. Where common along a single trail, flowers of Plummer's mariposa lily may display a fairly interesting array of color, ranging from pale pink to deep rose lavender or light purple, all having petals bearded with a broad band of long yellow hairs.

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