

Eclipta L.

Eclipta prostrata (L.) L., FALSE DAISY Annual, taprooted and fibrous-rooted, 1–several-stemmed from base, typically forming pairs of branches at most nodes in canopy, often rooting at lower nodes, prostrate to decumbent or ascending, in range < 50 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, scabrous, strigose. **Stems:** cylindric, to 3 mm diameter, green to purplish red, with internodes to 120 mm long and \pm flaring below each node. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, sessile, without stipules; blade linear-lanceolate to narrowly elliptic or elliptic (lower leaves), 20–125 \times 7–24 mm, shallowly short-serrate on margins, acute to acuminate at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins raised on lower surface, strigose with conspicuous hair bases. **Inflorescence:** heads, in terminal and axillary, 1–several cymelike arrays, head radiate, 6–8 mm across, of 30–50 ray flowers and \pm 30–50 disc flowers, bracteate, strigose; bract subtending array leaflike; peduncle 4–20 mm, densely strigose, lacking bracts along axis; **involucre** hemispheric, 3.5–5 mm diameter, becoming cup-shaped and increasing to 2 \times in fruit, phyllaries typically 8 in 1(2) series, ovate, 3.5–5 mm long, outer phyllaries > inner phyllaries, green, 3–5-veined, strigose appearing ciliate on margins, with acute tips spreading (to 2 mm beyond ray flowers) and becoming appressed to fruits; receptacle slightly domed, with bractlets (paleae), palea bristlelike, 1.5–2.5 mm long, with upward-pointing barbs above midpoint. **Ray flower:** pistillate, bilateral, ca. 0.5 mm across; **calyx (pappus)** absent or vestigial = jagged rim (with 2 minute awns); **corolla** unlobed or shallowly 2-lobed, 2–2.4 mm long, whitish; tube cylindric, < 0.5 mm long; limb linear, obtuse, with flattened bristles at base + top of tube; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, narrow wedge-shaped, \pm 1.2 mm long, green and whitish, 3–4-sided; style exerted \pm 0.7 mm long, 2-branched, the branches short and whitish tinged rose at tip. **Disc flower:** bisexual, radial, 0.5 mm across; **calyx (pappus)** absent or vestigial = jagged rim (with 2 minute awns); **corolla** 4(–5)-lobed, ca. 1.5 mm long, whitish; tube short; throat \pm 0.7 mm long; lobes deltate, \pm 0.3 mm, with several stout hairs on 1 lobe and 0–several hairs on other lobes; **stamens** 4(–5), fused to top of corolla tube, slightly exerted; filaments free; anthers fused into cylinder surrounding style, basifixed, dithecal, 0.6 mm long, pale yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, narrow wedge-shaped, \pm 1.2 mm long, green and whitish, 3–4-sided; style slightly exerted, 2-branched, the branches short. **Fruits:** cypsela, (3–)4-sided, slightly compressed wedge-shaped, in range 1.7–2.2 \times 0.7–1 mm, when immature bright white with green tips, maturing brown, sides typically warty (tuberculate), top truncate and with short hairs + the jagged remnant of style base; pappus (if present) a jagged rim, occasionally with 2 awns < 0.2 mm long. Early September–late October.

Naturalized. Annual occasionally observed in late summer in damp soil, e.g., along banks of lakes, ponds, and creeks. *Eclipta prostrata* has opposite, relatively narrow leaves and small heads with many tiny, white ray flowers.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson