

Lepechinia Willd. PITCHER SAGE

Lepechinia fragrans (Greene) Epling, FRAGRANT PITCHER SAGE. Shrub, drought-deciduous to semi-evergreen, much-branched, 100–200 cm tall; shoots velveteen, whitish tomentose with soft, long, dendritic hairs, shorter unbranched hairs, and small sessile glandular hairs, strongly aromatic. **Stems:** young stems \pm square, rounded on edges, ca. 5 mm diameter, green; older branches with orange-brown bark. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole 10–30 mm long; blade deltate or ovate to heart-shaped or with spreading basal lobes (hastate), 55–140 \times 30–90 mm, typically truncate at base, dentate on margins, acute at tip, pinnately veined with veins raised on lower surface, soft and velvety texture or feeling sticky to clammy.

Inflorescence: leafy raceme, terminal and axillary, 10+-flowered, bracteate; bractlet subtending pedicel leaflike, triangular to heart-shaped, 11–75 \times 6–40 mm, sessile; pedicel slender, 11–35 mm long, bearing stalked glandular hairs and dendritic hairs. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, \pm 10 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, inflated at the base, light green; tube 7.5–13 mm long, with long dendritic hairs and short, capitate glandular hairs, internally glabrous; lobes subequal, triangular-lanceolate, 10–18 \times 3.5–6 mm, at least as long as calyx tube and sometimes extending to near the end of corolla tube, lobes 3-veined, with dendritic hairs on both surfaces but sparser inside; **corolla** 5-lobed, 20–35 mm long, very pale lavender to white with faint lavender markings on lateral sides, externally with dendritic hairs, the hairs the densest on lobes and upper throat, becoming glabrous on lower throat; tube \pm 6 mm long, with a dense ring of white hairs concealing nectary and ovary at constriction between tube and throat; throat ca. 20 mm long, expanded, somewhat inflated on lower side, conspicuously ridged on floor; lower lobe liplike, rhombic when flattened, 8–10 \times 6–8 mm, notched to entire at tip; other lobes subequal, semicircular, 2.5 \times 4 mm; **stamens** 4, 2 short and 2 longer, the longer pair 10–12 mm long and attached on floor of throat with 1 on each side but slightly lower than ridge, the shorter pair 3–5 mm long, attached midthroat below upper 2 corolla lobes; filaments strongly curved and positioning anthers against roof of throat, white, glabrous; anthers included, dithecal, 2.5–3 mm long, sacs spreading and rounded across tips, lavender, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale lavender; **nectary disc** beneath ovary, domelike, 2 mm across, white; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, strongly 4-lobed, lobes spheric, 0.8 mm; style arising from ovary base attached in center of lobes, 20–25 mm long, white; stigmas 2, exerted \pm 3 mm beyond anther of longer stamens, ca. 1.3 mm long, acute, glabrous. **Fruit:** nutlets, (1–)4, obovoid, in range 4–4.5 \times 3 mm, \pm dull dark brown, smooth, glabrous, with thick pericarp; scar slightly oblique, linear-fusiform, 0.4–0.5 mm long, white. Early April–mid-July.

Native. A very aromatic, velveteen shrub of chaparral, riparian woodland, and southern oak woodland in relatively undisturbed regions of the central and western SMM. Although the corolla of *Lepechinia fragrans* typically is very pale lavender, in certain locations the flowers are essentially white.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson