

Limonium Miller SEA-LAVENDER, MARSH-ROSEMARY

Limonium californicum (Boiss.) A. A. Heller, WESTERN MARSH-ROSEMARY. Perennial herb, halophytic, evergreen, rhizomatous, fibrous-rooted, rosetted, several–many-stemmed at base from woody caudex, acaulous, clump-forming, with ascending to spreading, funnel-shaped inflorescences, 20–55 cm tall; shoots with only basal leaves arising from caudex, glabrous; rhizomes reddish, woody. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole partially sheathing, broadly crescent-shaped in \times -section, to 75 mm long, often whitish, narrowly winged; blade obovate to elliptic or oblong, 50–200 \times 15–95 mm, the shortest at base of inflorescence, often folded upward from midrib, long-tapered and asymmetric at base, entire and wavy or somewhat crisped on margins, obtuse or slightly notched at tip, pinnately veined with midrib conspicuously raised on lower surface, with dark dots (= sunken salt glands). **Inflorescence:** panicle, terminal with pseudo-dichotomous branching, each branchlet terminating in a 1-sided, many-flowered, spikelike cluster, bracteate, glabrous; axis cylindrical to blunt-angled, zigzagged, not winged, wiry, with sheathing, appressed bracts, bract elliptic to ovate, to 10 mm long, membranous on margins, with raised midrib; bractlet subtending pedicel appressed, ovate, 2.5–4 mm long, membranous or with membranous margins; pedicel < 1 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, ca. 3 mm across, erect to ascending in bud and flower; **calyx** 5-lobed, inversely narrow-conic, 4.5–5.5 mm long; tube 5-ribbed, green and reddish or red-brown on upper half, in range typically glabrous; lobes broadly acute to broadly acuminate, 0.5–1 mm long, white-scarious; **corolla** 5-lobed; tube < 0.5 mm long, white; lobes oblanceolate, slightly $>$ calyx, white at base to pale blue-violet above, somewhat folded upward from conspicuous midrib, rounded and cupped to hooded at tip; **stamens** 5, fused to corolla tube just above base; filaments flat, 2.5–3 mm long, pale lavender; anthers not exceeding corolla hood, dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.4–0.7 mm long, purplish, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, obovoid, ca. 1 mm long, green and white, with 5 conspicuous ribs, minutely beaded, depressed-truncate at tip forming rim, 1-chambered with 1 ovule pendulous on a long stalk; styles 5, arising from rim atop 5 ribs, erect, 3–3.5 mm long, light lavender; stigma cylindrical, short-papillate. **Fruit:** achenelike, with persistent calyx, 1-seeded, cylindrical, 4 \times 0.8 mm, with 5 ribs approaching 5 spreading style bases, minutely beaded with a \pm transparent surface. **Seed:** sausage-shaped, ca. 2.5 \times 0.5–0.8 mm, reddish brown or purple-red. Mid-May–late September.

Native. A halophytic perennial herb growing in coastal salt marsh at Pt. Mugu in sites where plants are not submersed. *Limonium californicum* is a distinctive plant forming clumps of basal rosettes. During summer each rosette produces a terminal inflorescence. The inflorescence is repeatedly forked and three-dimensional, having flowers at branchlet tips in dense, one-sided clusters.

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