

Nemacladus Nutt.

Nemacladus ramosissimus Nutt., NUTTALL'S NEMACLADUS. Annual, wispy, fine-taprooted, rosetted, acaulous, with 1–many inflorescences arising at base, each having a short, stemlike peduncle before bifurcating into ascending flowering shoots, in range 4–20 cm tall; shoots with only basal leaves, pubescent below with arching or sharply bent, flat hairs, nearly glabrous above; cotyledons persistent, ovate, 1–1.5 mm long, with petioles 1.5 mm long. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole 1–3 mm long, pubescent or \pm ciliate on margins; blade spatulate to ovate or elliptic, 1.5–3(–15) \times 1–1.5(–4) mm, dull, long-tapered at base grading into petiole, entire or margin oppositely to suboppositely toothed or lobed, obtuse at tip, with inconspicuous midrib, glabrous or short-hairy on margin and base. **Inflorescence:** 1 or more panicles of racemes, terminal, many-flowered, bracteate; peduncle cylindric, 4–15 mm long, reddish brown, sparsely puberulent with arching or sharply bent, flat hairs; bract subtending each fork, ascending or becoming curved or coiled, linear to linear-oblongate, 3–6 mm long, sometimes toothed or lobed at tip, margin folded upward in lower 1/2 or greater of length; axis forking 1–4 times, the forks either symmetric with both forks = racemes or asymmetric where 1 fork = a raceme and then branches again, ultimate axes \pm straight; bractlet subtending pedicel bractlike; pedicel spreading, (5–)8.5–12 mm long, reddish brown to dark red, slightly sigmoidal with a slight outward bend at base, straight in middle, with an upward curve at tip, obliquely attached to flower. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, 3–3.5 mm across; hypanthium inversely conic, 0.8 \times 1 mm, green, glabrous; **sepals** 5, arising from rim of hypanthium, erect, subequal, linear, 0.7–1 \times 0.3–0.4 mm, the shortest sepal on lower side and separated from the others, glabrous, persistent; **corolla** 5-lobed, white with reddish purple vein to each lobe; tube 0.7–1 mm long, \pm saclike on lower side; lobes subequal, lanceolate-triangular, 1.2–1.7 \times 0.8–1 mm, vein not reaching tip; **stamens** 5; filaments free at base united into a tube surrounding style, splitting into 5 short lobes below spreading anthers 1.3–1.5 mm long, white becoming rose-red below anthers, with a few long hairs above midpoint, erect most of length, sharply curved inward near tip so that anthers and stigma are pointing downward in center of flower in bud and then erect at anthesis, after pollination arching outward and positioning anthers and stigma between corolla lobes; anthers basifixed, dithecal, < 0.3 mm long, yellowish green with reddish on margin, minutely pointed at tip, longitudinally and inwardly dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1, \pm 1.5 mm long; ovary hemi-inferior, conic at base and hemispheric above, 2-chambered, each chamber with many ovules attached to central placenta; style enveloped by and = number of stamens, positioned with stamens to the lower side; stigma capitate, dark rose to purplish red, papillate. **Fruit:** capsule, dehiscent at top by 2(4) valves, 20–30-seeded, spheroid, ca. 2 mm, 10-ribbed; within persistent, spreading sepals. **Seed:** spheric with a short conic beak, 0.5–0.6 \times 0.4–0.5 mm, light to dark brown, pitted-netlike, the pits \pm hexagonal, arranged in 9–10 columns of 4–6 pits per column. Mid-April–late May.

Native. A wispy herb collected to date only from full-sun open ground in two grassy locations in range, likely elsewhere but easily overlooked. *Nemacladus ramosissimus* grows in gravelly soil with a basal rosette of tiny leaves and forms an open inflorescence with forked (zigzagged) axes and small flowers.

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