

Plagiobothrys Fisch. & C. A. Meyer POPCORNFLOWER

Plagiobothrys acanthocarpus (Piper) I. M. Johnst., ARROJO ALLOCARYA, ADOBE POPCORNFLOWER. Annual, taprooted, rosetted, several-stemmed at base, strongly decumbent (ascending), 8–15(–35) cm tall; shoots densely strigose (never hispid), with leaves and bracts drying black-purple with dye; tap root commonly not reddish when extracted from soil. **Stems:** cylindrical, < 2 mm diameter, lacking descending ridges from leaves, tough. **Leaves:** opposite (plant base) and helically alternate above (cauline leaves and bracts), simple, petiolate with pair connected across node (basal leaves) and sessile (cauline leaves and bracts), without stipules; petiole winged, grading into blade; blade linear to oblanceolate-linear or spatulate, 10–35 × 1–4.5 mm, not clasping at base, entire, acute at tip, midrib only conspicuous and raised on lower surface, upper surface aging sparsely hairy, lower surface strigose with hairs having blisterlike bases and drying colorless. **Inflorescence:** racemelike (cyme) but leafy and appearing like a spike, terminal, somewhat coiled in bud but straight in fruit, in fruit 50–300+ mm long, many-flowered, flowers clustered but fruits widely spaced, bracteate, strigose like shoot; in branched forks of axes diverging ± 30°; bractlet not subtending flower but where present often ± opposite flower and slightly lower on rachis, leaflike, oblong or elliptic to oblanceolate, 3–15 × 1–2 mm, lower surface densely strigose, persistent in fruit but typically not closely associated with pedicels; pedicel at anthesis < 0.5 mm increasing 2× in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 1.5–2.5 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, barely fused at base, at anthesis 1.7–2.5 mm long increasing 2× in fruit, densely strigose; tube inconspicuous; lobes ascending, equal, lanceolate, arching over fruits, with some hairs on outside pale brown, internally with strigose hairs; **corolla** 5-lobed, trumpetlike (salverform), ± 2.5 mm long, in bud with 5 dimples at top of throat beneath calyx lobes; tube barrel-shaped, constricted beneath and above ovary, expanding as ovary lobes enlarge; throat with minute appendages from midvein of corolla lobes, light yellow, internally with inconspicuous appendages next to filaments forming a ring; lobes rounded, ± 0.6 mm long; **stamens** 5, fused to corolla tube, alternate with corolla lobes, included; filaments < 0.2 mm long, whitish; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, ± 0.2 mm long, orange-yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, deeply 4-lobed, lobes ovoid, 0.3–0.4 mm long, green, without ribs, with short, colorless projections, each chamber with 1 ovule; style attached near midpistil appearing near tips of ovary lobes but arising between lobes, ± 0.3 mm long, pale green; stigma capitate, 4-lobed; base of ovary dome-shaped, ± 0.6 mm diameter, becoming more conic as fruit matures. **Fruits:** nutlets, 4, vertical and somewhat weakly attached laterally on a dome-shaped receptacle; nutlet body ovoid, ± 1.5 mm long + > 40 radiating, barbed prickles on outer face, brown, the prickles < 1 mm long, between prickle bases warty, the inner (ventral) side keeled on beak, extending from the triangular scar defined by a collar and deeply concave, the collar surrounded by coral-like ridges. Late February–late April.

Native. Annual rarely observed in range growing in depressions on clay soil, where water collects and remains for weeks. *Plagiobothrys acanthocarpus* has leaves that dry black-purple as well as brownish hairs on the calyx, which are typical for most species in the

genus, but this is an easy species to identify from nutlets, because they have prominent prickles with barbed bristles.

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