

Ranunculus L. BUTTERCUP

Ranunculus hebecarpus Hooker & Arnott, HAIRY-FRUITED BUTTERCUP, SLENDER BUTTERCUP, DELICATE BUTTERCUP. Annual, ± fibrous-rooted, several-stemmed at base, ascending, 8–25 cm tall; shoots with basal leaves and cauline leaves, pilose. **Stems:** cylindric, 1 mm diameter, soft-hairy. **Leaves:** helically alternate, 3-foliolate to palmately 3-lobed, petiolate, without stipules; petiole channeled, 15–75(–90) mm long, membranous-winged, the stipulelike wings 3.5–8 mm long; blade of lobed leaves kidney-shaped to inversely heart-shaped in outline, 10–20 × 20–30 mm, thin, deeply divided into 3 lobes, principal lobes deeply toothed (basal leaves) or entire and lanceolate (canopy leaves), the central lobe fan-shaped and 3–5-toothed, the lateral lobes fan-shaped or shortened and 3–6-toothed, often with a deep division between middle teeth, with principal veins from base to lobes and major teeth; blade of 3-foliolate leaves 30 × 35–40 mm, leaflets 10–15 × 13–20 mm wide with lobing similar to that of lobed leaves, petiolules channeled, 4–8 mm long. **Inflorescence:** cyme, terminal and axillary, open, 2–16-flowered, bracteate; bractlet subtending the lowest pedicel leaflike, typically 3-foliolate with leaflets lanceolate to oblanceolate and occasionally lobed, 15–20 mm long, upper bractlets gradually reduced, typically simple and unlobed or lobed; pedicel ascending, at anthesis 1–2 mm long increasing to 15 mm in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 2–2.5 mm across; **sepals** 5, overlapping, cupped-oblong to cupped-oblanceolate, in range 1–1.3 × 0.7–0.8 mm, greenish or yellowish along midvein, whitish on margins, pilose on outer surface, early-deciduous; **petals** 0–5, clawed; claw < 1 mm long, tapered to base; limb spreading, ovate, 0.5 mm long, glossy light yellow, with erect, nectar-producing flap at base; **stamens** 2–5, free, erect, 1–1.3 mm long; filaments colorless; anthers basifixed, dithecal, ± 0.3 mm long, yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistils** (3–)5–8(–11), length = stamen length; ovaries superior, D-shaped compressed side-to-side, with hooked hairs on sides; style forming a recurved beak with a papillate stigma along the upper edge. **Fruits:** achenes, radiating from receptacle, the ring of achenes 4–6 mm across; fruit body ± lenticular with conic beak; ± 2 mm long + beak 0.5 mm long, beak strongly hooked (straight), sides with short hooked bristles. Early-March–mid-April.

Native. Annual seldom noticed appearing in wet early springs on moist chaparral slopes, often in the shade of shrubs. *Ranunculus hebecarpus* in vegetative form resembles annual Apiaceae with which it occurs, and the tiny flower, like Apiaceae, is nonshowy. The fruits have a set of hooks, so that achenes also superficially resemble mericarps of certain umbellifers, but using a hand lens, it is easy to recognize that buttercup that has superior ovaries and separate floral organs.

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