

*Rupertia* J. W. Grimes RUPERT'S SCURF-PEA

*Rupertia physodes* (Dougl.) J. W. Grimes, CALIFORNIA-TEA. Perennial herb, colonial, producing stolons, fibrous-rooted, several-stemmed at base, trailing to decumbent with occasional erect shoots, 40–80 cm tall; shoots soft-hairy, gland-dotted throughout, the glands yellowish and convex on recent growth, reddish brown and concave on older growth, mildly fragrant; stolons shallowly buried, typically with 1–several adventitious roots per node, woody, covered with brown bark. **Stems:** angled and low-ridged, to 3 mm diameter, with several ridges descending from each leaf,  $\pm$  straight, sparsely short-strigose becoming glabrate; hollow. **Leaves:** helically alternate, pinnately 3-foliolate, petiolate with lateral leaflets attached to upper edge of rachis, with stipules; stipules 2, attached to swollen leaf base, reflexed, linear-lanceolate to narrowly oblanceolate or narrowly elliptic, 4–8(–10)  $\times$  1–3 mm, ciliate on margins, strigose with very dark purplish hairs, persistent or tardily deciduous; petiole channeled and 5-angled above pulvinus, 15–70 mm long; rachis deeply channeled, (6.5–)12–25 mm long, 5-angled; petiolules stout, 1–2(–3) mm long, darker green than petiole or rachis, sericeous often with some deep purplish hairs; blades of leaflets broadly ovate or broadly elliptic to round, in range 25–65  $\times$  20–55 mm, typically terminal leaflet  $>$  lateral leaflets, dull dark green, rounded at base, entire, acute, obtuse, or rounded at tip with inconspicuous, soft point, pinnately veined, surfaces and margins sparsely strigose. **Inflorescence:** raceme, axillary, many-flowered, having clusters of (2–)3 flowers and clusters alternate (sometimes opposite at first node), bracteate; peduncle ridged, to 80(–105) mm long; rachis 6–45 mm long,  $\ll$  peduncle, at anthesis internodes 1–3 mm long increasing to 3–5 mm long in fruit; bractlet subtending pedicel deciduous on swollen, persistent base, oblanceolate or obovate to spatulate, in range 3–6  $\times$  1.5–2.5 mm, with dark hairs and white hairs; pedicel 1–2 mm long increasing slightly in fruit, with dark hairs. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, pealike (papilionaceous), 5 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, tubular or narrowly bell-shaped, 6–8.5 mm long, greenish, conspicuously gland-dotted, coarse-hairy with deep purple and white hairs; tube 1.5–4  $\times$  lobe length, somewhat oblique at orifice, slightly saclike at base, compressed side-to-side, internally glabrous; lobes unequal, acute to acuminate, 1–3 mm long with the longest on the lower side, sericeous on margins and internally sometimes above midpoint; **petals** 5, clawed, creamy white to ivory; banner claw 4–6 mm long, limb oblanceolate to rhombic, 10–14  $\times$  5–7 mm, arching upward and curving back laterally, short-notched and often purplish at tip, green on surface; wings 2, length  $\leq$  banner, claw 4.5–6.5 mm long, limb 2.5–3 mm wide, acutely and backwardly lobed like base of limb; keel of 2 fused petals, scooplike,  $<$  wings, slightly notched at tip, dark lavender to purple approaching tip or as a large spot opposite anthers,  $\pm$  lobed at base of limb; **stamens** 10,  $\pm$  monadelphous (10 filaments fused), 7.5–11 mm long; filament sheet straight-tapered hooked sharply at tip, filaments of upper stamens united only to midpoint, whitish; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.3–0.5 mm long, broad, orange, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen orange, copious, sticky; **pistil** 1, 8.5–9.5 mm long, on short stalk (stipe) 0.5 mm long; ovary superior, narrowly conic compressed side-to-side, 1–3 mm long, white-sericeous, 1-chambered with 1 ovule attached to upper side; style whitish, strongly hooked near greenish tip, swollen at bend, white-sericeous at base but hairs sparser toward tip; stigma capitate, greenish, with papillate hairs. **Fruit:** pod (legume), indehiscent, 1-seeded, D-shaped, 5.5–6  $\times$  4 mm,

with persistent style, tannish, wall  $\pm$  leathery, netlike, sericeous with tan and scattered black hairs. **Seed:** compressed kidney-shaped, ca.  $5 \times 3.2\text{--}3.5$ ,  $\pm$  glossy olive and dark brown; hilum lateral, near midpoint, elliptic, 1 mm long, collared. Mid-May–early July.

Native. A clonal perennial growing in deep shade of southern oak woodland, known currently from few sites in SMM. When not in flower, at a distance *Rupertia physodes* might be confused with a colony of poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), especially without closely examining and crushing the leaves, so it may be that *Rupertia* is unrecognized but present elsewhere in inaccessible, shady canyons with humus-rich soil.

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