

Scandix L.

Scandix pecten-veneris L., VENUS' NEEDLE. Annual, taprooted, rosetted, 1–several-stemmed at base, with ascending lateral branches, 15–30+ cm tall; shoots with basal leaves and cauline leaves, ± short-hirsute, without aroma. **Stems:** cylindrical, to 2 mm diameter, greenish to rose or purplish with photosynthetic stripes alternating with strands of support tissue (collenchyma), sparsely short-hirsute; hollow. **Leaves:** helically alternate, odd-1–3-pinnately compound, either symmetrically pinnate with paired primary leaflets or with alternate primary leaflets, lobes and other segments alternate, petiolate, without stipules; petiole deeply channeled, in range 10–50 mm long, wide-winged and nearly fully sheathing at base, the wings 3–6 mm long with membranous margins 1–2 mm wide and long-ciliate, the lower side V-shaped and strongly 2-sided; blade ovate to oblong in outline, in range to 50 mm long, blade = petiole; rachis angled and deeply channeled, sparsely short-hirsute (glabrate); lobes dissected > midway; ultimate segments linear to narrowly oblong-lanceolate, 1.5–4 × ca. 0.4 mm, minutely ciliate on margins, acute with minute point at tip, pinnately veined with principal veins slightly raised on lower surface, often short-hairy along principal veins (glabrous). **Inflorescence:** compound umbel, lateral and opposite leaf, with (1–)2–7 umbellets, umbellet 3–11 mm across, (2–)3–13-flowered, flowers bisexual (some aborting), bracteate, ± glabrous with several toothlike hairs to sparsely short-hairy; peduncle with flattish sides aging cylindrical, at anthesis ca. 10 mm long; **involucre** absent; primary ray ascending, at anthesis 2–11 mm long increasing to 10–25 mm long in fruit, green and striped; involucl of bractlets subtending pedicels 2–6, commonly fused at base, ascending-spreading, broadly lanceolate or oblong to broadly obovate and deeply 2-lobed, 2.5–3.5 mm long increasing 2× in fruit, at anthesis < flower, with veins ending in lobes, minutely serrate on margins; pedicel unequal, at anthesis 0.5–2.5 mm long increasing in fruit, glabrous. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, 1–1.5 mm across; **sepals** absent; **petals** 5, spreading, unequal, obovate or heart-shaped to roundish, 0.5–2 mm long within a single flower including some with short, incurved tip, 1 large, 2 intermediate, 2 small, white, only small ones symmetric, with midridge on upper (inner) surface weakly developed or absent; **stamens** 5, free, at anthesis ascending later spreading; filaments to 1 mm long, white; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.25–0.4 mm long, light yellow to pale greenish white, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, distinctly 2-lobed with a short 2-parted, yellowish green, nectar-producing platform (stylopodium, stilar tissue) on top, heart-shaped with truncate tip, when pollen released ± 0.5 × ± 0.4 mm but continually elongating, green, ribs faint, at anthesis with minute, inconspicuous projections along ribs later becoming upward-pointing barbs, 2-chambered, each chamber with 1 ovule; styles 2, erect to ascending, 0.3 mm long, pale green to whitish; stigmas terminal, minute. **Fruit:** schizocarp, of 2 dry, 1-seeded halves (mericarps), linear with long beak having persistent stylopodium and styles, to 80 mm long, beak >> seed body, scabrous with upward-pointing barbs along ribs and beak; stylopodium halves ascending, often reddish, styles ascending, to 1.5 mm long. Early April–early June.

Waif. Annual collected once, by Tim Thomas, in a disturbed patch at Malibu Creek State Park. *Scandix pecten-veneris*, called Venus' needles, has exceptionally long and narrow,

minutely barbed mericarps because the fruit has a long, seedless beak, making this species easy to recognize in fruit. In vegetative condition, this umbellifer resembles a robust specimen of *Daucus pusillus*, which has very different fruits. If recognized, our plants fit subspecies *pecten-veneris*.

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