

*Senna* Miller CASSIA, SENNA

*Senna artemisioides* (DC.) B. R. Randell, SILVER CASSIA. Shrub, evergreen, unarmed, much-branched with mostly ascending shoots, in range 30–140 cm tall; shoots gray-green, densely short-strigose and with scattered and inconspicuous glandular hairs. **Stems:** cylindrical, inconspicuously zigzagged, ash white, internodes typically 9–15(–35) mm long, to 50 mm long for first internode on axillary shoot. **Leaves:** helically alternate, even-1-pinnately compound, in range with 3–6 pairs of lateral leaflets spaced 1.7–4.6 mm apart along rachis, petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, attached to stem and leaf base, awl-shaped, 1.5–2(–3) mm long, pale green portion early-deciduous with a minute persistent base and having an axillary tuft of reddish purple hairs; petiole 8–12 mm long, pulvinus absent; rachis 13–23 mm long, extended 0.5–1 mm beyond the uppermost pair of leaflets, with purplish to almost black short hairs between paired primary leaflets, in range with a gland at base of the lowest pair of leaflets, the gland = an extrafloral nectary, dome to turnip-shaped, green aging red; petiolule absent; blades of leaflets arched-ascending from rachis, linear-subcylindric, in range 13–45 × ± 1 mm, ± equal on a leaf or the shortest ones at tip, deeply channeled on upper side (= facing other leaflet), basal 0.5 mm whitish and ± pulvinuslike, entire, rounded at tip, venation obscure, dull, silvery hairy with fine short-strigose hairs. **Inflorescence:** raceme, axillary, in range 8–13-flowered (typically 8), flowers helically alternate (the basal ones often appearing opposite or pseudowhorled), bracteate, densely short-strigose and with minute, inconspicuous glandular hairs; peduncle 6–25 mm long; rachis ascending, 3–9 mm long; bractlet subtending pedicel spreading, cupped-ovate, 1.5–2.5 mm long, yellowish, deciduous leaving a knob; pedicel 6–12 mm long at anthesis and in fruit, sometimes aging glabrate, expanded at tip with the expanded receptacle, rarely with 1 minute, early-deciduous bracteole near midpoint of pedicel. **Flower:** bisexual, slightly bilateral, 15–18 mm across; **sepals** 5, heteromorphic (several forms), abscised only after fruit begins to grow, unequal, cupped-ovate or cupped-oblong, 2.5–5 × 1.5–2.8 mm, progressively larger from the outermost to the innermost, short-strigose, ciliate with wavy hairs on margins, outer 2 sepals short and hoodlike, green or becoming yellow, short-strigose, inner sepals petal-like, bright yellow, less hairy; **petals** 5(–6), cupped-ascending, typically not spreading and corolla not dishlike, short-clawed, ± subequal with banner somewhat wider; claw 1–1.5 mm long; limb obovate to subroundish, 7–10 × 5–8 mm, bright yellow and sometimes with faint reddish pinnate venation; **stamens** 10, free, heteromorphic of 2 or 3 sizes, all appearing fertile; filaments cylindrical, of different lengths, yellow; the lower 3 stamens with asymmetrically sigmoid filaments 3.5–4 × 0.8 mm and anthers 4–4.5 mm long, 2 with filaments 2.5–3 × 0.5 mm and anthers 3.5–4 mm long, other stamens with filaments 1–1.5 × 0.5 mm and anthers 2.5–3.3 mm long; anthers basifixed, dithecal, arrow-shaped at base, curved inward, brownish, with longitudinal ribs on each sac on each side of a dehiscence zone not opening or tardily dehiscent from base upward; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1, short-stalked (stipe), stipe at anthesis ca. 1.5 mm long increasing 2–3× in fruit, pubescent at base; ovary superior, compressed sickle-shaped, incurved and arched over the longest stamens, glabrous, 1-chambered with ca. 20 ovules attached to upper side; style 0.5 mm long; stigma concave with a few short hairs on rim, green turning reddish. **Fruit:** legume (pod), dry, dehiscent, 10–18-seeded, oblong-linear, in range 52–95 × 5.5–9 mm, flat, ± straight to somewhat

curled, glossy dark brown, valves like thick paper with vertical septa visible on surface.

**Seed:** obovate-oblong, 6–8 × 3–4 mm, thin, glossy brown with less glossy central region on both faces, the central region narrowly oblong, 2–3 mm long; hilum laterally subbasal. Late January–mid-May.

Naturalized. Shrub in 2006 observed escaping along Decker Road (SMM) and showing the possibility of spreading farther by having fruits with many viable seeds. *Senna artemisioides* is now considered to be a taxonomic dumping ground for many different forms arising from interspecific hybrids in Australia, so that our local plants likely is a form species with features from its cultivated parent here in southern California.

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