

Acmispon maritimus (Torrey & A. Gray) D. D. Sokoloff var. *maritimus*, COASTAL LOTUS. Annual, taprooted, several-stemmed at base, prostrate and forming mats to 45 cm across or ascending to 40 cm tall; shoots short soft-hairy or becoming glabrescent; roots nodulated. **Stems:** cylindric, to 2.5 mm diameter, green or aging purplish red. **Leaves:** alternate distichous, odd-1-pinnately compound with 5–8 alternate, subopposite, and opposite leaflets, the basal leaflet unpaired, to 50 mm long, petiolate without pulvinus, with stipules; stipules 2, conic and somewhat compressed, ± 0.3 mm long, yellowish orange aging reddish, with a tuft of short, whitish hairs at tip; petiole shallowly channeled, 0.5–6 mm long, without pulvinus; rachis flattish and channeled, $10\text{--}29 \times 1\text{--}2.5$ mm, \pm short-pilose; petiolules 0.3–0.7 mm long, light green to colorless, pulvinuslike, sometimes glabrous; blades of leaflets unequal, roundish to obovate, $3.5\text{--}15 \times 2.7\text{--}10$ mm, basal leaflet \pm roundish and upper 2–3 leaflets $>$ basal leaflets, \pm symmetric, flat, tapered to rounded at base, entire, obtuse to rounded at tip, only midrib visible on lower surface, dull, short-strigose. **Inflorescence:** umbel (condensed raceme), axillary, in range (1–)2–4-flowered, bracteate, soft short-hairy; peduncle 2.5–11 mm long; bract subtending umbel leafletlike and short-petiolate, 1–3-foliolate, blades heart-shaped or obovate to roundish or broadly ovate, $3.5\text{--}8 \times 2.8\text{--}7$ mm, rounded to slightly cordate at base, entire, obtuse to rounded at tip, with 2 glandular stipules at base, short-strigose; bractlet subtending pedicel with swollen base and minute, broadly triangular, glandular and reddish tip; pedicel at anthesis ca. 0.5 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, pealike (papilionaceous), 4.5–5 mm across; **nectary chamber** around nectar-producing receptacle beneath ovary, cup-shaped; **calyx** 5-lobed (toothed), 3.5–4.5 mm long, sparsely short-hairy; lobes narrowly triangular, 1.2–2.2 mm long, with 2 upper lobes slightly longer and broader than other lobes; **petals** 5, vivid yellow (except keel), clawed (claws white), glabrous; banner $6.5\text{--}8.2 \times 4.8\text{--}6$ (flattened), claw narrow, 2.3–2.5 mm long, expanding abruptly into limb, limb \pm oblate or broadly obovate, slightly notched or rounded at tip, folded and covering wings and keel prior to anthesis, at anthesis bent upward and spreading at margins, with up to 9 reddish orange lines at base, becoming orange-tinged on limb after pollination; wings 2, 6.5–8 mm long, claw 2–2.3 mm long, with backward-pointing lobe ca. 1 mm above claw, free at rounded tip, curved inward at margins, with a saclike, inward protrusion near base coupled to a similar outward protrusion on banner; keel of 2 partially fused petals fused most of limb on lower margins to tip, 6.5–7 mm long, claws 2.7–3 mm long, whitish, limbs \pm scalpel-shaped, $4\text{--}4.4 \times 2\text{--}2.2$ mm, mostly pale greenish yellow but yellow at tip and sometimes on lower outer margins, straight along upper margins, curved on lower margins, the widest ca. 1/4 length from tip, slightly lobed above each claw with a longitudinally oriented, saclike outward protrusion (compressed side-to-side) near base of each limb; **stamens** 10, diadelphous (9 filaments fused and 1 free); filaments 5–7 mm long, sheet surrounding ovary to 1.5 mm from anthers, whitish, glabrous, curving up slightly below where they become free; anthers dithecal, < 0.3 mm long, light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen white, sticky; **pistil** 1, 6–7 mm long, sessile or short-stalked at base; ovary superior, straight-linear, 4–5 mm long, green, tapered, short-strigose, 1-chambered with 10–12 ovules attached to upper side; style strongly arched upward, 1.5–2 mm long, light green to whitish, glabrous, tuft of hairs absent below stigma; stigma terminal, capitate, minute, greenish. **Fruit:** pod (legume), dehiscent by 2 valves, commonly 10–12-seeded, cylindric, $15\text{--}35 \times 1.5\text{--}1.8$ mm, brownish, strongly veined on top and bottom, hooked 2–2.5 mm at

tip, glabrous. **Seed:** compressed-ellipsoid, ca. 1×0.7 mm, dull dark brown; hilum tiny and asymmetric on 1 side of indentation. Late January–late June.

Native. Annual best known growing on dunes and in sandy soil along the coast but also found in opening in coastal sage scrub and chaparral as well as on burns and along roadcuts throughout the range. *Acmispon maritimus*, formerly treated as *Lotus salsuginosus*, mostly grows as prostrate mats only several centimeters tall; it has bright yellow flowers in clusters of two to four. To be absolutely certain about identification, technical features of fruits and seeds need to be examined.

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