

Adenostoma sparsifolium Torrey, RED SHANK. Small tree or shrub, evergreen, with a dense, feathery canopy, highly branched, 200–600 cm tall; shoots lacking long shoot-short shoot organization, leaves not densely clustered, with blisterlike glands, pleasantly aromatic, young growth glutinous; inner bark orange-tan to red or red-brown, outer bark shaggy and gray, shedding in long, thin strips. **Stems:** ridged, ca. 1.5 mm diameter on young leafy stems, covered with decurrent leaf bases 2 internodes long, flexible, internodes 1–5 mm long, gland-dotted, soon forming reddish brown periderm. **Leaves:** typically helically alternate but opposite at the lowest 2 nodes of each branch, simple, short-petiolate, without stipules; petiole ± appressed, ca. 1 mm long; blade linear, ± cylindric, 4–15 × 0.5 mm, flexible, entire, lower surface grooved along midrib, puberulent and gland-dotted. **Inflorescence:** panicle of racemes, terminal, typically 15–60 mm long, many-flowered (occasionally several-flowered raceme), bracteate; bract subtending each branch awl-shaped or leaflike, 1–2 mm long; axes slender; bractlets subtending pedicel 1 or 2, awl-shaped; pedicel 0–4 mm long, the longer pedicels with spaced, lanceolate bracteoles; bracteoles subtending flower several, lanceolate to ovate, 1–1.7 mm long, with raised midvein and membranous margins. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 3–3.5 mm across; hypanthium bell-shaped to inversely conic, to 1 mm long, green, shallowly 10-ribbed with short hairs along ribs; **sepals** 5, deltate, 0.8–1 mm, membranous; **petals** 5, ovate, 1.5–2 × 1–1.2 mm, white, arching, persistent; **stamens** 10–12, with 2 or 3 opposite each sepal, free; filaments 1 mm long, white; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.5 mm long, yellow becoming off-white, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **pistil** 1, ca. 1.5 mm long; ovary superior, ca. 0.8 mm long, hairy above midpoint, 1-chambered with 1–2 ovules; style off center and often curved at base, yellowish green, zigzagged; stigmatic area minutely papillate, forming a ∩-shaped crest. **Fruit:** achene (in range fertile fruits seldom present), inversely conic, 1.5 mm long, brown, obliquely truncate at tip. Late June–early September.

Native. Large evergreen shrub to small tree locally common in chaparral growing on sandstone or volcanics along the main ridge of SMM from the vicinity of Saddle Peak westward to the area of Boney Ridge. *Adenostoma sparsifolium*, shaggy-barked red shank, can be found on slopes above 550 meters elevation, e.g., on and near SMMNRA Circle X Ranch, but occurs occasionally as low as 330 meters elevation. Red shank is resin-coated and aromatic due to monoterpenes produced by blisterlike glands covering the shoot, and the plant burns rapidly but resprouts readily after fire. *Adenostoma sparsifolium* is remarkable because it flowers during midsummer drought, and in any given year. It does not appear that red shank is reproducing from seeds anywhere in range, because seedlings are not seen, even in wet years, and fruits are hardly ever observed.
B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson