

Aptenia cordifolia (L. f) Schwantes, BABY SUN-ROSE. Perennial herb, short-lived, ± fleshy, ± taprooted (not rooting at nodes), mat-forming, 1–several-stemmed at base, prostrate, < 10 cm tall; shoots with equal cauline leaves at each node, 2-dimensional (plagiotropic), glabrous but papillate at nodes. **Stems:** cylindric, to 2 mm diameter, internodes 10–75 mm long. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, petiolate with pairs fused across each node as narrow ledges, without stipules; petiole to 15 mm long, sometimes papillate along edges; blade ovate, 8–49 × 8–26 mm, < 0.8 mm thick, cordate to tapered at base, entire, acute at tip, obscurely pinnately veined, dark green. **Inflorescence:** leafy cyme, terminal but flowers appearing axillary from the growth of an axillary branch from below flower, 1–several-flowered, flowers horizontally oriented, lacking bracts; pedicels 2–3 mm long. **Flowers:** bisexual or sterile, radial, ca. 10 mm across, with receptacular tissue above ovary; **sepals** 4, opposite decussate, formed on receptacular tissue above ovary, spreading becoming erect in fruit, fleshy, dimorphic; outer 2 sepals opposite, lifelike with petioles, ovate, ± flat, with papillate hairs on basal margin; inner 2 sepals shorter, conic with long-tapered tip, before anthesis arched upward, later horizontal, 2–5 mm long increasing in fruit; hypanthium collarlike, short, membranous and whitish; **petals** ca. 80 in several series, arising from upper hypanthium, unequal, oblanceolate-linear, ca. 5 × 0.2–0.4 mm, light to dark purplish pink to magenta but lacking midstripe, paler at base, blunt acute to obtuse at tip; petaloid staminodes ca. 50, linear, narrower and shorter than inner petals, mostly whitish with yellowish tip; **stamens** many, ± free; filaments unequal, to 3 mm long; anthers positioned over stigmas, dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.5–0.7 mm long, light yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, sunken in receptacle tissue, 4-chambered, each chamber with many ovules; styles absent; stigmas 4, ovoid to teardrop-shaped (lacrimoid), ± yellowish green. **Fruit:** berry, inverted conic, many-seeded, with a persistent, caplike cover; sepals erect becoming desiccated and shrunken but persistent. **Seed:** roundish D-shaped, with rows of prominent wartlike cells (tuberculate).

Naturalized. Annual not collected in range for many decades but once recorded near the mouth of Topanga Canyon. *Aptenia cordifolia* has paired ovate leaves (“cordifolia”), which are scarcely fleshy and flowers about half the diameter and less red than the widely cultivated hybrid. Fresh materials were not available for study, and the literature does not have a complete description of flowers that includes sizes and colors.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson