

Atriplex prostrata DC., THINLEAF ORACH, FAT-HEN, SPEARSCALE. Annual, weakly taprooted and fibrous-rooted at plant base and along decumbent stems, several-stemmed at base, principal lower branches opposite and subopposite, with spreading to ascending branches at most nodes (decumbent or prostrate), (10–)30–100 cm tall; monoecious; shoots with widely spaced leaves, having bladderlike hairs (vesicular) on new growth soon becoming glabrate with pearly remnants on surface (sparsely powdery or farinose) but leaves appearing green on both surfaces. **Stems:** subangular to ridged, to 10 mm diameter, with 2 ridges descending from each leaf, tough, initially green becoming reddish striped over veins, with internodes mostly 30–95 mm long, vesicular-hairy on new growth soon becoming glabrate; periderm fracturing and becoming tannish on older, mostly leafless stems. **Leaves:** opposite or subopposite below midplant, sometimes subopposite at base of new branches, mostly helically alternate in canopy and reproductive axes, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole broadly channeled, 5–42 mm long, often reddish on margins; blade triangular to deltate with flaring lobes at base (hastate) or arrow-shaped (sagittate, large leaves) to lanceolate (upper canopy leaves), 30–75 × 10–90 mm, thin, truncate to broadly tapered at base and sometimes with 1 tooth on each basal lobe (large leaves), mostly entire or with irregularly spaced teeth, acute to acuminate at tip, pinnately veined and 3-veined at base with 3 principal veins raised on lower surface, glabrate to sparsely farinose. **Inflorescence:** spikelike and paniclelike arrays of subspheroid clusters of unisexual flowers (glomes) on a short terminal and lateral spike, paniclelike array terminal, open, and to 220 mm long, with principal branches widely spreading to decurved to 115 mm long, branches decreasing base to tip, most spikelike, secondary branches only on the longest branches, to 15 mm long, spikelike arrays typically axillary, ascending to arching, to 90 mm long; glome of (0)1–2(–3) staminate flowers (often terminal on long branches, less frequently at tip or within cluster of pistillate flowers of lower glomes) and 7–12 pistillate flowers, bracteate, with dense vesicular hairs; bract subtending array = cauline leaf; axes ridged, ridges pink and grooves with vesicular hairs, aging reddish purple; internodes between principal branches < 50 mm, ridged and farinose; bract subtending principal branch only below midpoint of array, leaflike, lanceolate to oblanceolate (linear), 2–30 × 0.7–8 mm, reduced upward, tapered at base into petiole to 3 mm long, entire, rounded at tip with short point, vesicular-hairy to glabrate, bract subtending secondary branch small and slender; branch with glomes interrupted below midpoint and mostly 10–20 mm apart (to 30 mm), glomes ± congested approaching tip of axis; bracteoles enclosing pistillate flower 2, ovate to broadly ovate, at anthesis 1.5–1.7 × 1.2–1.4 mm, fleshy, green but soon becoming reddish from tip and margins toward center, fused at base, acute at tip, sparsely to moderately vesicular-scurfy on outer face. **Staminate flower:** radial, 0.7–1 mm across; **perianth (calyx)** 5-lobed, tube short; lobes incurved, triangular-ovate, ± 0.5 mm long, fleshy, in bud commonly reddish becoming green at anthesis, membranous on exposed margins and at tip; **stamens** 5, fused at base; filaments flattened and tapered, 0.2–0.4 mm long, pale green to light yellowish green; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, ± 0.3 mm long, yellow, sacs ± oblanceoloid and joined by a short connective near the tip, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **pistil** absent. **Pistillate flower:** fully included within bracteole; **perianth** absent; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, vertical, ± discoid to compressed-obovoid, 0.8–1 mm long, light green, 1-chambered with 1 ovule attached at base; style 2-branched, the base conic, 0.1–0.15 mm

long, light green, the branches equal to unequal, 0.2–1 mm long, light brownish, stigmatic most of length. **Fruit:** utricle enclosed within 2 bracteoles; bracteoles mostly free but fused at base, of 2 sizes, broadly ovate to pentagonal or triangular, 4.8–6.3 × 4.5–5.3 mm (of large set) and 2.2–3.5 × 2.2–3.2 mm (of small set), green to purple becoming brown to black at maturity, size corresponding to size of seed, truncate to slightly cordate at base, 3–4-toothed on margins, broadly acute to broadly acuminate at tip, sparsely farinose or glabrate, thickened on outer face and typically developing 2–4(–6) pointed, spongy warts (tubercles); utricle thin-walled, adhering to seed. **Seed:** ± discoid, dimorphic, with radicle ascending laterally to ca. midpoint, large seed 2.2–2.7 mm across and ca. 1 mm thick, dull brown and weakly pebbled on surface, smaller seed 1.3–1.8 mm across and ca. 0.6 mm thick, shiny black. Late July–early October.

Naturalized. Annual weed especially common on the western edge of range growing in moist places (freshwater, e.g., along Revolon Slough; brackish and saltwater, e.g. Mugu Lagoon and Malibu Lagoon), especially near the coast but scattered elsewhere. *Atriplex prostrata* formerly was called *A. triangularis*, but also was treated as *A. hastata* or *A. patula* subsp. *hastata*, names that nicely describe the shape of typical hastate leaves, but *A. patula* is now more narrowly defined.

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