

Boechea sparsiflora (Nutt.) Dorn, ELEGANT ROCKCRESS. Perennial herb, with a branched caudex, rosetted, 1–several-stemmed at base, flowering shoot typically unbranched and ascending, in range 30–60 cm tall; shoots with many leaves forming a basal tuft + cauline leaves, green and not glaucous, densely hairy throughout (including flowers), the hairs mostly 2–4-branched from tip of a vertical stalk, some hairs unbranched, initially soft-hairy aging somewhat hispid. **Stems:** cylindric to faintly low-ridged, < 4 mm diameter, hairs mostly 2-armed but some unbranched. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate (lower leaves) and sessile and clasping (upper leaves), without stipules; petiole slightly compressed top-to-bottom, to 12 mm long, often with unbranched hairs on edges; blade oblanceolate (basal leaves) grading to narrowly lanceolate (cauline leaves), 40–85 × 6–12 mm wide, long-tapered (when petiolate) or with acute to acuminate basal lobes (auricles) 2–3 mm long when clasping, entire or short-dentate to inconspicuously short-serrate on margins, acute to acuminate at tip, pinnately veined with midrib raised on lower surface, ± hirsute with several-branched hairs, upper surface with unbranched hairs along basal part of midrib. **Inflorescence:** raceme, terminal, many-flowered, ± flat-topped with open flowers at same level as buds, in range buds purple, lacking bracts, densely hairy with several-branched hairs; pedicel ± ascending, at anthesis 3–5 mm long increasing 2–3× in fruit, in range not spreading-recurved in fruit, densely hairy like stem. **Flower:** bisexual, ± radial, 4–5 mm across; **sepals** 4, opposite decussate, erect, boat-shaped and linear-lanceolate, 5–7 mm long, deep purple, cupped at tip, lower pair slightly keeled and longer but extending to same level as upper pair, paler to greenish at ± saclike base, upper pair sometimes greenish along midrib, readily abscising; **petals** 4, ascending, oblanceolate, in range 4.5–5.8 × 1.7–2 mm, dark violet to dark purple, at base paler to whitish, broadly tapered to long-tapered at base or appearing somewhat clawed (< 1.5 mm long) by having inrolled margins; **stamens** 6, subequal, with outer 2 having shorter filaments and longer anthers and 4 inner with longer filaments and shorter anthers; filaments erect, 2–2.6 mm long (outer stamens) and 2.7–3.5(–5.5) mm long and < petals (inner stamens), greenish, tapered from base; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 1.8–2 mm long (of short stamens) and 1.4–1.6 mm long (of long stamens), light yellow, cordate at base, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **nectary** disclike, sinuous ridge outside 2 shorter filaments and inside 4 longer filaments, dull green; **pistil** 1, slightly > stamen length, light green; ovary superior, subcylindric somewhat compressed ⊥ septum near base, glabrous; style short and stout; stigma capitate, circular and at anthesis liplike becoming slightly 2-lobed in fruit, with ring of papillate hairs on inner depressed area. **Fruit:** siliqua (silique), dehiscent by 2 valves, many-seeded, ± flattened parallel with septum, linear and gradually curved, in range 65–82 × 2 mm, seeds not bulging, seeds in 1 row per chamber with attachments alternating top and bottom, with midvein below midpoint, glabrous; beak absent. **Seed:** D-shaped to flattened 4-sided, 1–1.4 mm long, lustrous brown with conspicuous radicle, partially thin-winged. Late February–mid-April.

Native. Perennial herb most commonly observed in range in chaparral, especially on recent burns, e.g., Shepherd's Flat SMMNRA Cheeseboro, where it occurs in crevices of rock outcrops, sandstone, volcanic, and calcareous. *Boechea sparsiflora* was formerly treated as a species of *Arabis*, and our populations were treated as *A. sparsiflora* var. *californica*. Some local plants appear to be intermediate with many features of variety

arcuata, but the pedicels are not spreading-recurved and our populations have mostly unbranched and some two-branched hairs on axes. The confusion persists because four species are now recognized, *B. arcuata*, *B. californica*, *B. pauciflora*, and *B. sparsiflora*, and as such a population from our range would be designated *B. arcuata*, which may mean that either the taxonomic definitions or geographic ranges of the two taxa needs to be reassessed.

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