

Cardionema ramosissimum (Weinm.) A. Nelson & J. F. Macbr. Perennial herb, taprooted, many-stemmed from root-crown, matlike, branching several–many times to form current growth, short-decumbent, to 10 cm tall, spreading to 30 cm from center; shoots densely covered with leaves and conspicuous, reflective stipules, parts woolly tomentose. **Stems:** < 2 mm diameter, flexible, partially covered with dried leaves and stipules on older, prostrate stems, internodes woolly tomentose. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, appearing sessile, with stipules; stipules 2, fused to inner surface of petiole at leaf base and to each other to midpoint, membranous aging scarious, ovate to lanceolate, 4.4–7 × 1–2 mm, entire or jagged and short-dentate on margins, acuminate at tip, persistent; petiole 1–1.5 mm long, tannish; blade ascending to spreading, linear, 5–12 × 0.45–0.6 mm, green, entire, spine-tipped (0.3–0.5 mm long), venation obscure, glabrous except woolly tomentose at base. **Inflorescence:** cyme, axillary, 1–7-flowered, bracteate, woolly tomentose on flowers; bracts paired and initially subtending each flower but subsequent flowers developing in bract axils, ovate, 2.2–4 × 1.2–2 mm, membranous, jagged and short-dentate on margins, 2-toothed at tip, the teeth acuminate, 0.4–0.8 mm long, with midvein extending as a bristle between teeth or bent downward, generally bristle < teeth. **Flower:** bisexual, ± radial, ± 3 mm across; hypanthium shallowly cuplike, < 0.3 mm deep; **sepals** 5, helically arranged, unequal with outer 3 sepals > inner 2 sepals, 2.4–3.5 mm long increasing to 5 mm in fruit, the basal portion oblong, 1.3–1.5 × 0.35–0.55 mm, fleshy, green, woolly-tomentose on membranous winged margin, concave to flat on inner surface, hooded at tip, the spines stout-conic, 1–2 mm long, 0.2–0.4 mm wide at green base, with translucent point 0.7–1 mm long; **petals** absent; **stamens** (3)5, free, opposite calyx lobes (opposite only outer 3 lobes); filaments 0.25–0.35 mm long, semitransparent pale green or opaque green; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, oblong to heart-shaped, 0.2–0.25 × 0.2–0.25 mm, yellow, cordate at base, slightly notched at tip (retuse), longitudinally dehiscent; pollen orangish yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, 2-conic to obovoid, 0.4–0.8 × 0.3–0.5 mm, 1-chambered with 1 ovule attached to base; styles 2, < 1 mm long, stigmatic to base. **Fruit:** utricle, indehiscent or splitting lengthwise, 1-seeded, membranous, conforming to shape of seed, faintly ridged longitudinally, often retained within spine-tipped sepals (involucrelike). **Seed:** obovoid to ellipsoid, 1.2–1.25 × 0.6–0.7 mm, narrower at base, broader but pointed at tip, golden buff to golden brown, slighter darker at base, slightly wrinkled on faces. Mid-April–early August.

Native (probably). Matlike perennial herb known from the seacoast beneath Point Dume. *Cardionema ramosissimum* originates from coastal South America and may have arrived here via natural means, but also could have been carried to our shoreline by early travelers and traders along the Pacific Coast. As in *Loeflingia*, sandcarpet has nonshowy flowers with sepals that instead resemble spine-tipped leaves, and interrupted by persistent, scarious stipules.

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