

*Croton setigerus* Hooker, TURKEY MULLEIN, DOVE WEED. Annual, taprooted, 1-stemmed at base, intricately and regularly 3-branched including subtending each inflorescence, branches  $\pm$  spreading and divergent, matlike to dome-shaped or flat-topped, 3–50 cm tall, to 80 cm across; monoecious; shoots gray-green from reflective hairs, initially velveteen (stellate hairs) but aging bristly, inconspicuously glandular-hairy, hairs white, the stellate hairs  $< 0.7$  mm diameter with many nonhispid arms of similar length, stellate-hispid hairs 2–3 mm long, stellate at base with a long, sharply tipped central arm, the glandular hairs minute, sessile, spheric, colorless and barely discernable beneath other hairs, strongly odorous; without noticeable latex. **Stems:** irregularly angled,  $< 15$  mm diameter, tough, flexible. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, vestigial and obscure among hairs; petiole cylindric, 10–65 mm, ca 1 mm diameter, densely stellate and stellate-hispid; blade ovate, 15–85  $\times$  7–60 mm, obtuse to broadly tapered or short-tapered at base, entire, acute to obtuse at tip, typically palmately 3-veined with veins slightly sunken on upper surface and strongly raised on lower surface, green beneath hairs, the hairs similar on both surfaces. **Staminate inflorescence:** cyme, terminal, typically 7-flowered, lacking bracts, densely stellate-hairy; peduncle erect, to 10 mm long; pedicel slender, 2–3 mm long, flexible. **Staminate flower:** ca. 4 mm across; **calyx** 5(–6)-lobed, cup-shaped; tube dish-shaped,  $< 0.2$  mm long; lobes elliptic or oblong, 2–2.3  $\times$  0.7 mm, densely stellate-hairy; **corolla** absent; **stamens** 6–10, free, 3.5–5 mm long; filaments exerted, white; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.6–0.7 mm long, cream-colored, the connective with short, glandular hairs, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen cream; **pistil** absent. **Pistillate inflorescence:** cyme, appearing axillary, with 1–3 flowers around peduncle of staminate inflorescence, sessile to subsessile. **Pistillate flower:** **perianth** absent, with 4–6 glands, the glands peglike, 0.3–0.5 mm long, transparent yellowish green on greenish base; **stamens** absent; **pistil** 1, densely white stellate-hairy; ovary superior,  $\pm$  oblong, 2–2.5 mm long, green beneath hairs, 1-chambered (rarely 2-lobed and 2-chambered) with 1(–2) ovule attached to center; style 1(–2), slender, erect, 4–6(–10) mm long, becoming curved or coiled. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, typically 1-seeded, dehiscent with 2 valves from tip to base, ovoid and  $\pm$  3-sided, 4.5–5  $\times$  2.5–3 mm with persistent beak and 1 conspicuous ridge, densely covered with white stellate-hairs, skin separating from smooth, tannish endocarp; typically 1 or 2 capsules maturing only in the crotches of lower and midplant branches. **Seed:** broadly ellipsoid to  $\pm$  ovoid, 3–4.2(–5)  $\times$  2–2.7 mm, glossy mottled brownish gray and black (when immature tan and brown), smooth, rounded on back, obscurely obtuse-angled and ridged on side of hilum just below tip. Late April–early November.

Native. A native annual that behaves like an invasive annual weed of waste areas, especially along roadsides and trails, where turkey mullein can be common and form dense populations. *Croton setigerus*, formerly treated as the monospecific genus *Eremocarpus*, flowers during dry summer months and generally finishes blooming by late August, but individuals can be found still with flowers during the fall. It is easy to spot *C. setigerus* by its low, flat-topped or dome-shaped canopy of grayish, velvety leaves, but the plant is unpleasant to handle because of the irritating hispid hairs on stems and petioles.

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