

Linanthus dianthiflorus (Benth.) Greene, GROUND PINK. Annual, tiny and short-lived, fine-taprooted, typically 1–several-stemmed at base, branched or not, erect, in range 2–18 cm tall; shoots hairy to nearly glabrous. **Stems:** cylindric, extremely thin and wiry, often turning purplish, typically with hairs, eventually forming periderm. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, sessile, without stipules; blade linear to threadlike, 5–20 mm long, fleshy-subcylindric or hemi-cylindric, entire, blunt-acute at tip, venation typically obscure, upper surface and on margins with scattered hairs or essentially glabrous. **Inflorescence:** cyme, terminal, 1–3-flowered; bract = subtending leaf; peduncle (pedicel) at anthesis 5–8 mm long increasing to 20 mm long in fruit, reddish, hairy to nearly glabrous, with some glandular hairs. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 9–30 mm across; **calyx** (4–)5(–6)-lobed, 6–16 mm long; tube < lobes, upper portion connected by membranous panels; lobes overlapping, ± subequal, linear, green, hairy to glabrous, fleshy with membranous basal margins, membranes translucent or with red-purple; **corolla** (4–)5(–6)-lobed, funnel-shaped, 12–18(–24) mm long; in bud lobes strongly twisted; tube + throat 4–9 mm long, whitish at base then bright yellow, purple ring in middle becoming 5 wedge-shaped or heart-shaped spots, glabrous; lobes obovate, 6–9(–15) mm long, conspicuously short-dentate, white just above tube becoming lavender, pink, rose, or white at tips; **stamens** (4–)5, fused to base of floral tube; filaments unequal, slender, 5–7 mm long, with white, purple, and lavender coloration like corolla tube; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, ± 2.5 mm long, bright yellow, ± arrow-shaped at base, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen bright yellow; **nectary disc** surrounding base of ovary; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, sausage-shaped, 1.3–1.5 mm long, green, glabrous, 3-chambered, each chamber packed with ovules attached to center; style 8.5–10 mm long, 3-branched just above anthers, the stigmatic branches ascending, threadlike, 0.8–2 mm long. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 3 valves, ± 24-seeded, oblong and low 3-lobed, 4–5.5 × 2 mm, tan, rounded at tip, valves narrowly obovate and arched backward. **Seed:** D-shaped to parallelogramlike with 1 or 2 truncate ends, 0.6–0.8 mm long, dark brown, with hilum in a deep crease or pit, edges between faces low-ridged or sometimes narrowly winged, on surfaces not truncate; seed coat wrinkled. Late January–late May.

Native. Annual and one of the most showy and easily recognized tiny spring herbs, throughout the range occurring occasionally in open patches of coastal sage scrub. Often the flower of *Linanthus dianthiflorus* appears to be larger than the rest of the plant, and these dwarf plants are pollinated by small bees. In every population there is considerable variation of the corolla width and color, and one can also observe variations in lobe number of the calyx and corolla.

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