

Polycarpon depressum Nutt., CALIFORNIA MANYSEED. Annual, fine-taprooted, briefly rosetted, 1–several-stemmed at base, prostrate, in range 1–3 cm tall; shoots somewhat 2-dimensional (plagiotropic), cauline leaves and axes beaded, glabrous. **Stems:** ± finely 10-ridged, to 0.2 mm diameter, green to rose-red, the ridges decurrent from leaf bases, beaded, colorless, consisting of cells with axially elongate papillae. **Leaves:** opposite and never appearing whorled, simple, petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, attached to stem, narrowly triangular to deltate-acuminate, 0.4–1.2 mm long, silvery scarios, persistent; petiole 1–4 mm long, indistinct from blade, the ridges beaded like ridges on stem and midrib; blade obovate to spatulate, 2–5 × 0.3–1.5 mm, long-tapered at base, entire, acute to obtuse at tip, pinnately veined with only midrib conspicuous, the midrib with rows of beaded-papillate cells on lower surface, dull green. **Inflorescence:** dichasial cyme, terminal and axillary, ± open, several-flowered, bracteate, glabrous; peduncle stemlike with beaded ridges; bract subtending lateral branch or subtending branchlet stipulelike, lanceolate, membranous becoming scarios; bractlet subtending pedicel like bract; pedicel with beaded ridges, at anthesis 0.5–1 mm long increasing 2× in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 0.5 mm across at anthesis increasing in fruit; hypanthium short; **sepals** (4–)5, unequal, lanceolate to ovate, 0.5–0.7 mm long increasing 2× in fruit, mostly green aging reddish on herbaceous tissue, scarcely keeled, margins whitish membranous, not hoodlike at tip; **petals** (4–)5, formed on hypanthium rim, ± elliptic to narrowly ovate or oblong, 0.7–1.1 × ± 0.4 mm, acute to truncate or short-notched at tip, whitish; **stamens** 3–5, free, produced on hypanthium rim, included; filaments appressed to ovary, < 0.2 mm long, colorless or whitish; anthers basifixed, dithecal, ± 0.2 mm long, yellow, longitudinally and inwardly dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1, < 0.5 mm long, on a minute stalk (gynophore); ovary superior, broadly ovoid, pale green, 1-chambered with many ovules attached to center post and base; style < 0.2 mm, obscurely 3-branched; stigmas minute. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 3 twisting valves, typically 10–16-seeded, ovoid, –1.7 × 1.1–1.2 mm, with seeds attached to placentae at base; hidden by persistent calyx. **Seed:** D-shaped, 0.4–0.5 × 0.4 mm, black, somewhat minutely bumpy (pusticulate).

Native. A tiny annual to date collected in range only at one site (lower Topanga Canyon, SMM) in coastal sage scrub. *Polycarpon depressum* has slender opposite leaves, and all structures are smaller than in the naturalized *P. tetraphyllum*.

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