

Polygonum aviculare L. subsp. *depressum* (Meisn.) Arcang., COMMON KNOTWEED, OVAL-LEAF KNOTWEED, DOORWEED. Annual, taprooted, several-many-stemmed at base with shoots radiating from base in all directions, matlike, highly branched throughout, in range \pm prostrate and trailing, generally < 10 cm tall; shoots somewhat 2-dimensional (\pm plagiotropic), with only 1 leaf form, green to gray-green or bluish green, glabrous. **Stems:** finely ridged (to 20 ridges and conspicuous on dried specimens), to 2 mm diameter, with many ridges descending from each leaf, tough but not wiry, green often with reddish nodes, straight to somewhat zigzagged, internodes 3–30 mm long, nodes slightly swollen especially on principal axes, slightly glaucous. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, short-petiolate, with stipules; stipules (2) fused into cylinder sheathing stem (ocrea), deeply cut or split to base into persistent, scarious, triangular segments, 3–12 mm long, straw-colored to light brown, veiny with raised veins extending from stem ridges, \pm persistent; petiole flattish, 0.5–5 mm long; blade elliptic, oblong, narrowly ovate, or lanceolate to narrowly obovate or oblanceolate, 3–30 \times 1.5–9 mm, when young somewhat inrolled, broadly tapered at base, entire to inconspicuously toothed on translucent margins, obtuse to acute at tip, pinnately veined with midrib and sometimes lateral veins raised on lower surface. **Inflorescence:** leafy cyme, with an axillary cyme at every node throughout canopy, each axillary cyme 1–3(–5)-flowered, bracteate, glabrous; bract subtending cyme leaflike, overtopping flowers, often abscising while in flower; bractlet subtending pedicel ocrealike and scarious but open, < 1 mm long; pedicel somewhat compressed, 0.5–1.5 mm long, whitish, flexible. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, upright and often flattened initially on 1 side, at anthesis 1–2 mm across, open to semi-open or \pm closed; **perianth** 5-lobed, 1.5–2 mm long increasing and expanding in fruit; tube vase-shaped, \pm to perianth midpoint, light green often aging reddish brown; lobes petal-like and exserted from ocrealike bract, overlapping, subequal, oblong, green with white margins and tip aging pink eventually to rose, at least outer 2 lobes keeled and cupped; **stamens** 5–7, included; filaments arising from rim of perianth tube, ovate with fine point, 0.6–0.8 mm long, pale yellow; anthers dorsifixed, conspicuously dithecal with spreading or pendent sacs, 0.2 mm long, yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen light yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, ellipsoid to oblanceoloid and 3-sided, at anthesis \pm 0.6 mm long, light green to yellowish, faces concave, 1-chambered with 1 ovule; styles 3, fused at base, spreading, stout, \pm 0.15 mm long, colorless; stigma minute, capitate. **Fruit:** achene, abscised with persistent perianth, ovoid and unequally 3-sided, in range (1.5–)1.8–2.3 mm long, faces slightly convex to flat but others slightly concave often on the same fruit, semi-glossy dark brown, roughened to minutely bumpy, edges blunt; achene slightly exserted from papery brown perianth. January–December.

Naturalized. Annual weed found throughout the range in waste areas, especially along roadsides. Characteristically, the glabrous, ocrea-bearing shoots of *Polygonum aviculare* are plagiotropic and prostrate over bare, hard-packed soil. This is mostly a selfer that produces a fruit from each tiny flower. Normally plants are not present during November and December, but flowering individuals can be found somewhere within range any week of the year. The common form in range is subspecies *depressum*, which has the perianth tube and lobes roughly equal, but it is likely that other subspecies occur in range, and the observer should look whether the flower on a sample has a longer perianth, with lobes

significantly longer than the tube, and seven to eight stamens. Be aware that perianth length varies with position and early versus late flowers, wherein the late-formed flowers produced on an individual tend to be smaller.

B. A. Prigge & A. C. Gibson