

Ribes californicum Hooker & Arnott var. ***hesperium*** (McClat.) Jepson, HILLSIDE GOOSEBERRY. Shrub, fall-deciduous, spinescent, openly branched, < 100–230 cm tall; shoots with long shoot-short shoot organization, each short shoot with a cluster of deciduous scales before forming leaves and flower; lower scales semicircular to ovate, 1–2 mm long, leathery to slightly woody, reddish brown, jagged and ciliate on margins, upper scales obovate to spatulate or hoodlike, 3–10 × 3–4 mm, pale green, 3-veined, white and broadly membranous and ciliate-tomentose on margins, obtuse to retuse at tip. **Stems:** cylindric, long shoots zigzagged, puberulent but soon becoming glabrescent with formation of strawberry red to red-brown periderm; internodes lacking prickles and bristles; nodal spines 1–3, 4–11 mm long, spreading from stem at 80–90°, colored like stem, the lateral spines oriented ± 90° to central spine, ≤ length of central spine (absent). **Leaves:** helically alternate, palmately ± 3-lobed or 5-lobed, petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, fused to petiole, to 1.5 mm long, tomentose, hirsute and capitate-glandular on margins; petiole to 53 mm long, short-villous to tomentose on upper side and sometimes sparsely so on lower side; blade heart-shaped to roundish in outline, 10–30(–55) mm wide, width slightly > length, the lobes broad and rounded, the terminal lobe divided to 1/3 or 1/4 distance to base, the lower lobes divided to 1/4 or 1/8 distance to base, thin, crenate and sometimes minutely ciliate on margins, the teeth with minute points, palmately veins with 3 principal veins raised on lower surface, dull, glabrous. **Inflorescence:** raceme, appearing terminal on a short-shoot, 1–2-flowered, flowers strongly pendent on flexible peduncle and pedicel, bracteate; peduncle 9–12 mm long; bractlet subtending pedicel sheathing and spatelike, ascending, semicircular, ca. 3 mm long, green, irregularly dentate and conspicuously ciliate on margins; pedicel 2–6 mm long, sparsely glandular with capitate red hairs; bracteoles along pedicel 1–4, concealed by bractlet, oblanceolate to obovate, 1–2 mm long, dentate and ciliate on margins, the teeth commonly gland-tipped. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 6–7 mm across, typically 10–18 mm long; hypanthium arising from top of ovary, tubular to narrowly bell-shaped, 2–2.5 × 2–3 mm, green, veins obscure, glabrous or sparsely short-villous, the inner surface a green **nectary**, nectar copious; **sepals** 5, reflexed at anthesis, pendent before and after anthesis, oblong-spatulate, 5–8 × 1.5–3 mm, ruby red with green tip on exposed surface, greenish aging red on concealed surface, rounded and ciliate at tip, with 3 parallel veins; **petals** 5, erect, 4–6 mm long, white with rose-colored base, broadly tapered at base, with inrolled margins, minutely toothed at tip; **stamens** 5, free, arising from hypanthium rim, alternate with petals, pendent and exerted, 7–8 mm long; filaments flattened, ≥ petal length, white; anthers dithecal, 3–3.5 mm long, with a short-acute tip, pale yellow, longitudinally and inwardly dehiscent; pollen pale yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary inferior, covered with stiff red bristles becoming prickles, spheric, ± 2 mm, green, 1-chambered with many ovules; style exerted, 12–14 mm long, 2-branched at or above midpoint, greenish, glabrous; stigmas terminal, green, wet. **Fruit:** berry, pendent on stalk 7–10 mm long, many-seeded; fruit body spheroid, 10–14.5 mm, reddish, densely covered with radiating prickles, 17–27 mm across (including prickles), the longest radiating prickles 3–6.5 mm long, sharp-pointed; pulp translucent; with persistent perianth and stamens. **Seed:** irregularly ellipsoid, 2.7–3.4 × 1.5–2 mm, in fresh pulp greenish drying reddish brown, having at least 1 paler, narrow wing lengthwise around seed. Mid-December–early March.

Native. Shrub occasionally encountered in southern oak woodland and on shaded, north-facing slopes in chaparral away from the coast. Hillside gooseberry can be mistaken in vegetative condition for the widespread *Ribes speciosum*, which can be found growing with it and has similar leaves and nodal spines. Both species have pendent, bristly fruits. *Ribes californicum* var. *hesperium* lacks internodal prickles and has unmistakable, pendent, white and ruby red flowers. In range our plants appear to be intermediate between var. *hesperium* and var. *californicum*. As in var. *californicum*, for our populations blades are essentially glabrous, but as in var. *hesperium*, stamens are less than twice as long as the petals and sepals are ruby red, but uncharacteristically possess green tips.

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