

Salix exigua Nutt. var. *hindsiana* (Benth.) Dorn, NARROW-LEAVED WILLOW, HINDS' WILLOW, SANDBAR WILLOW. Shrub, winter-deciduous, clonal, erect-stemmed with ascending lower branches, terminal twigs whiplike and flexible, in range typically < 400 cm tall; dioecious; shoots arising from winter buds first producing several leaves then 1 or 2 inflorescences, on new growth densely silvery tomentose-sericeous becoming glabrescent; buds on dormant stems appressed, tongue-shaped or ovoid, 1.8–3 mm long, swelling prior to flowering, the bud scale caplike, tomentose becoming glabrescent, having margins fused but not ridged; horizontal roots producing shoots or new individuals (sobiliferous). **Stems:** cylindric with 1 low ridge descending from each leaf, straight, not glaucous; young twigs orange-brown or reddish brown aging brown; leaf scars narrowly crescent-shaped having 3 conspicuous traces. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, short-petiolate or sessile, without stipules; petiole 0.5–5 mm long; blade linear or narrowly oblanceolate to narrowly lanceolate, 22–100 × 1.8–8 mm, symmetrically broadly tapered to long-tapered at base, entire to remotely toothed (short-dentate) on margins, acute to acuminate at tip, pinnately veined with conspicuous midrib raised on upper surface and platformlike on lower surface, sericeous and silvery green when young. **Inflorescences:** unisexual catkins, terminal, with vegetative shoots arising at base, emerging from winter buds with or after leaves, ascending, spikelike, with many alternate flowers, bracteate, villous. **Staminate inflorescence:** catkin (ament) cylindric, 6–30 × 5.5–8 mm, with 13–70+ flowers; peduncle 1.5–5 mm long, densely tomentose to villous; rachis villous; bract (bractlet) subtending flower (“floral bract”) ovate to obovate, 1.6–2 × 0.9–1 mm, light yellowish green with whitish margins, the margins incurved, acute to obtuse or truncate with rounded, toothed, or jagged edge, parallel-veined on lower surface, villous-tomentose on margins and near the base on lower surface. **Staminate flower:** **perianth** absent; **stamens** 2, fused at base; filaments ascending, subequal to unequal, 3.5–4 mm long, whitish or pale green and villous below midpoint, pale yellow above midpoint; anthers basifixed, dithecal, 0.6–0.8 × 0.4–0.6 mm, bright yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen bright yellow, copious; **nectaries** typically 2, 1 on upper (adaxial) side of stamens, 1 on lower (abaxial) side of stamens, bottle-shaped to oblong or sometimes 2-branched at tip and compressed front-to-back, < 0.8 mm long, pale green or yellowish at base, darker green or orange at glandular tip, sometimes nectaries aging bright orange; **pistil** absent. **Pistillate inflorescence:** ovoid-cylindric, 20–30 × 3.3–4.5 mm, with 20–42 flowers; peduncle 1–5 mm long, densely tomentose to villous; rachis densely tomentose; bract (bractlet) subtending flower (“floral bract”) linear to oblong or oblanceolate, 2.3–3 × 0.7–1 mm, light green above midpoint, acuminate to acute, truncate, 2-lobed, or variously toothed at tip, parallel-veined on upper surface, mostly glabrous on upper surface and sometimes the lower surface but typically villous on lower surface and often near the tip on upper surface. **Pistillate flower:** **perianth** absent; **stamens** absent; **nectary** 1, on upper (adaxial) side of pistil, peglike or flask-shaped, < 0.7 mm long, green with whitish or yellowish tip; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, ascending, narrowly lanceoloid, 2.2–2.5 × 0.8–1.1 mm, silvery green and densely sericeous, 1-chambered with 10–15 ovules attached to placentae on outer side; style absent or < 0.3 mm long; stigmas 2, 2-lobed, the lobes ± 0.5 mm long, reddish, papillate on upper side. **Fruit:** capsule, dehiscent by 2 valves, 20–30-seeded, V-shaped to moustache-shaped, to 5.2 mm long, the valves spreading or recurved, sericeous. **Seed:** with long, silky white hairs attached at 1 end (comose); seed body

oblong, 0.6–0.8 mm long, brownish, faintly ridged longitudinally and having 1 longitudinal groove; hairs fine, 4–6 mm long, white, attached via a ring. Late February–late March.

Native. Winter-deciduous shrub and the shortest willow, always shrublike and growing along wet roadsides and drainage ditches. *Salix exigua* is clonal via root sprouting, and it is dioecious, so often the individuals growing along a stretch of road commonly are only of one sex. The plant is easily recognized by its short stature, whiplike main axes, and narrow leaf blades. The other local species with just two stamens per flower is the very common tree species *S. lasiolepis*, with which narrow-leaved willow can never be confused.

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