

Spergula arvensis L., STICKWORT, STARWORT, CORN SPURREY. Annual, taprooted, several-stemmed at base, ascending to erect, in range 10–40 cm tall; shoots with fleshy unequal leaves in axillary clusters of 8–20, glandular-pubescent, somewhat viscid. **Stems:** cylindrical or slightly compressed at the most basal internode, to 1.8 mm diameter, with a bulbous swelling just above each node, the swelling 2× internode diameter, green becoming reddish on sunny side or swelling sometimes whitish, with dense spreading glandular hairs. **Leaves:** opposite but appearing whorled at each node, simple, sessile, with stipules; stipules 2, attached to stem at base of bulbous portion of internode, nearly fused beneath leaf cluster, very shallowly inversely triangular, < 1 mm long, white-scarious, persistent; blade linear, subcylindric compressed top-to-bottom, (1–)8–35(–45) × 0.5–1.1 mm, fleshy, entire, blunt at nongreen tip, glandular-viscid, lower surface channeled along midrib. **Inflorescence:** dichasial cyme, terminal (axillary), open, to 200 mm long, many-flowered, bracteate, glandular-pubescent and viscid; bracts subtending each fork 2, scarious, triangular, stipulelike; paired lateral branches divergent via bulbous bases (pulvinuslike); bractlet subtending pedicel bractlike; pedicel straight, at anthesis 4–5 mm long increasing to 24 mm long in fruit, with pulvinuslike base. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 7–8 mm across, dish-shaped; **calyx** 5-lobed; tube cup-shaped, 0.8–1 mm long, glossy green with 5 purple stripes; lobes overlapping, ovate, 3.2–3.8 × 1.5–2.1 mm, with membranous margins, acute and awnless at tip, glandular-pubescent; **petals** 5, oval to narrowly ovate, slightly < sepals, white, obtuse at tip; **stamens** 10, free, dimorphic; filaments ascending to erect, alternately long and short, flattened, 1 mm long (long stamens) and 0.5 mm long (short stamens), whitish; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.3 mm long, orange-yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen orange-yellow; **nectary disc** between filaments and pistil, lobed, green; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, ovoid, 1.5–1.7 × 1.3 mm, glabrous, green, 1-chambered with many ovules attached to central axis; styles 5, erect, 0.3 mm long, whitish; stigmas whitish, papillate. **Fruit:** capsule, dehiscent by 5 valves to or below midpoint, 5–30-seeded, ovoid, 5 mm long, glossy light brown, with spreading tips; perianth persistent. **Seed:** thick-lenticular, 1–1.3 mm long, blackish, with thin, light brown midrib and faces with khaki or cinnamon-colored, club-shaped papillae. Late-February–early May.

Naturalized. A white-flowered spring annual occasionally found along trails in SMM, especially along the fire road near Castro Peak, where in rainy years it can form a dense population. *Spergula arvensis* is a European weed that appears throughout North America, but in our range stickwort is rarely observed. Its leaves appear to be whorled, although this is a case where leaf arrangement is opposite, but there are additional leaves crowded at the nodes arising on immature axillary shoots.

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