

Trifolium obtusiflorum Hooker & Arnott, CREEK CLOVER, CLAMMY CLOVER. Annual, robust, taprooted, branched from axillary buds along main axes, decumbent or ascending, in range up to 100 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, glandular-puberulent, the hairs lacking swollen heads, in range generally not sticky; roots nodulated. **Stems:** somewhat angular when young aging cylindric, to 3 mm diameter, tough. internodes of main stems 70+ mm. **Leaves:** helically alternate, palmately 3-foliolate, long-petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2, attached to stem at node and as wings attached to petiole, 9–18 mm long, cut, veins conspicuously raised on lower surface and not darkly pigmented; petiole, channeled, on lower cauline leaves to 120 mm long decreasing upward, >> blade, pulvinus absent; petiolules ± 0.5 mm long; blades of leaflets oblanceolate to elliptic or broadly lanceolate, 15–40 \times 5–13 mm, terminal leaflet slightly larger, tapered at base, serrate base-to-tip having teeth ± 1 mm long with bristlelike point, rounded to truncate at tip, pinnately veined with midrib channeled on upper surface and raised on lower surface, dull and sometimes with a gray band across midpoint. **Inflorescence:** headlike raceme, having the lowest flowers sessile and other flowers short-pedicellate, axillary, 15–28 mm across, many-flowered, with flowers in whorls, spreading to ascending and never reflexed in fruit, bracteate, glandular-hairy; peduncle to 90 mm long, >> leaf; **involucre** of bractlets subtending the lowest whorl of flowers, \pm flat wheel-like, 20–25 mm across, acuminate teeth with sinuses < midpoint, central portion whitish and periphery green, veins not pigmented or conspicuously raised; bractlet subtending other flowers of second whorl only, bristlelike, ca. 5 mm long, early-deciduous; pedicel (upper flowers) to 2.5 mm long, with scattered glandular hairs. **Flower:** bisexual, bilateral, pealike (papilionaceous), 3–4 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, in range (9–)11–13 mm long; tube \pm cylindric to narrowly bell-shaped, 7–8 mm long, glandular-hairy, whitish; lobes bristle-tipped, green, somewhat glossy, subequal with the longest on the lower side, bristles to 2.5 mm long; **petals** 5, appearing fused near base into short tube, light lavender at base to dark pink with purple band on exposed portion, 14–18 mm long; banner ± 15 mm long, bent sharply forward to nearly flat; wings 2, clawed, = banner, tips white; keel of 2 petals partially fused only on lower edges approaching tip, clawed, back rounded, distal edge, < wings ca. 1 mm, hinge fused with 2 wings forming a pair of pinkish pouches; **stamens** 10, diadelphous (9 filaments fused and 1 free), ca. 12 mm long; filament sheet to about 2/3, straight or slightly curved, light pink to whitish; anthers basifixed, dithecal, orange-yellow; pollen orange-yellow; **pistil** 1, straight, ca. 1 mm > stamens, short-stalked at base; ovary superior, fusiform compressed side-to-side, 2 mm long, greenish, 1-chambered with 2 ovules attached to upper side; style slender, translucent; stigma terminal. **Fruit:** pod (legume), dehiscent, abscised with calyx when raceme shatters, (1–)2-seeded, obovate, ca. 4 \times 1.5 mm, wall nearly transparent and having conspicuous, raised, white veins, dehiscent along tip and upper (dorsal) edge; calyx scarious, ca. 20-veined calyx. **Seed:** beaked-ovoid, 1.6–1.9 mm long, glossy, smooth, brown mottled. Late May–mid-July.

Native. Known from the western SMM along creek banks (e.g., SMMNRA Circle X Ranch) and lake margins (e.g., Lake Sherwood). In our flora, *Trifolium obtusiflorum* typically is the last species of the genus to bloom, during summer, and also produces the largest flowers of any clover occurring in range. When presented with abundant water,

creek clover forms a rounded, shrublike canopy sometimes greater than a meter tall and across. In range, the calyx seem to be longer than often reported.

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