

*Urtica urens* L., DWARF NETTLE. Annual, taprooted, several-stemmed at base, erect, 10–95 cm tall; monoecious; shoots with soft, short hairs and needlelike stinging hairs, the stinging hairs 0.8–1.5 mm long, colorless on a colorless to pale green, multicellular, cylindrical base 0.3–0.5 mm long. **Stems:** ± 4-sided but cylindrical at shoot base, to 7 mm diameter, with rounded edges and grooved on each face (especially approaching shoot tip), tough (= strong stem fibers), green but sometimes aging rose to purple, with widely spaced, radiating stinging hairs, short, soft hairs mostly ascending. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, petiolate, with stipules; stipules 2 (4 per node), attached to stem, acuminate to narrowly triangular or lanceolate, 1–2.2 mm long, green with whitish, short-ciliate margins; petiole channeled, 2–28 mm long, 5-veined, in  $\times$ -section ± 5-angled, internodes with 0–several stinging hairs and also short hairs; blade ovate to broadly elliptic, in range 10–65 × 8–45 mm, thin, broadly tapered to truncate at base, deeply serrate on margins, acute to obtuse at tip, 3-veined or 5-veined from base (basal actinodromous), with widely spaced stinging hairs (especially on upper surface) and much shorter hairs on lower surface especially along veins and margins. **Inflorescence:** cymes in paniclelike arrays, axillary, each panicle of unisexual flowers, 2 cymes per axillary bud (4 per node) and from between them arises an axillary shoot, cyme-bearing nodes 5 or more per array, with many, tightly clustered, nonshowy staminate and pistillate flowers, lacking bracts; peduncle < petiole, typically < 20 mm long; axes with upward-pointing short hairs; pedicel < 0.5 mm long, not notably constricted below staminate flower where abscission occurs. **Staminate flower:** radial, distinctly 4-lobed in bud, ± 1.5 mm across before stamens elastically unfold, ± 2.8 mm wide after stamens unfold, abscising from pedicel after pollen released; **sepals** 4, ovate, 0.8–1 × 0.6–0.8 mm, cupped around anthers (anthers visible below sepal gaps), green but narrowly membranous on margin approaching tip, with bulbous-based hairs; **petals** absent; **stamens** 4, free, incurved with filament bent in half (inflexed); filaments springing loose at anthesis, ± 1.2 mm long, translucent; anthers exerted, dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.6 × 0.7 mm, pale yellowish white, longitudinally and inwardly dehiscent, pollen whitish; **pistil** rudimentary, sterile, funnel-shaped (or dish-shaped on a short stalk), ca. 0.3 × 0.5 mm, becoming squarish on drying. **Pistillate flower:** radial, at anthesis smaller than staminate flower, laterally compressed; **sepals** 4, dimorphic, the outer 2 sepals ovate, at anthesis 0.3–0.4 × 0.3 mm increasing to 0.5–0.6 × 0.3–0.4 mm in fruit, glabrous, sparsely glandular, sometimes with a hispid hair arising from the center and having ascending, submarginal hairs, the inner 2 sepals ovate, slightly larger than outer sepals at anthesis increasing to 1.8–2.5 × 1.4–2 mm in fruit, commonly with a central stinging hair and ascending, submarginal hairs, ± glandular, with a medial ridge; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, compressed-ovoid, ca. 0.4 mm long, 1-chambered with 1 ovule attached to base; style absent; stigma at anthesis purplish, papillate. **Fruit:** achene, ovate-lenticular, 1.9–2 × 1.3–1.5 mm, enclosed in greenish inner sepals, ± glossy light grayish brown, inconspicuously bumpy. Early January–mid-June.

Naturalized. An undesirable annual occurring throughout the range in waste areas, gardens, and agricultural fields. *Urtica urens* has painful stinging hairs, which, resembling minute hyperdermic needles, inject irritating acid into the skin. Bases of stinging hairs in this genus are cylindrical, not spheric.

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