Cistanthe maritima (Nutt.) Hershk., SEASIDE CALANDRINIA, SEASIDE RED MAIDS. Annual, fleshy, taprooted, not rosetted, several-stemmed at base, decumbent to prostrate with spreading branches, typically < 12 cm tall; shoots with fleshy, bluish green cauline leaves, glabrous, glaucous. **Stems:** cylindric, to 4 mm diameter, greenish becoming beige often tinged rose on exposed side. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate but indistinct from blade, without stipules; petiole ± hemi-cylindric and narrowly winged at base, wings becoming angles above, to 10 mm long, greenish tinged rose becoming greener approaching blade; blade oblanceolate or obovate, 10–45 × 5–18 mm, 2–3.5 mm thick, long-tapered at base, entire, obtuse to rounded at tip, pinnately veined but veins often inconspicuous, bluish green and conspicuously glaucous, sometimes dull purplish. **Inflorescence:** panicle of cymes, terminal and axillary, extending above leaves, cyme several-flowered, bracteate, glabrous; peduncle stemlike but more slender, 0–40 mm long (sometimes the lowest cyme arises at base), to 1.5 mm diameter but more swollen at base, glaucous; bracts subtending cyme branchlet 2 at each fork, cupped-ovate and somewhat sheathing, 2.5–5.4 mm long, green and fading or green with dark, irregular red-purple markings but often including a dark midvein, partially hiding flower buds, slightly keeled approaching tip, deciduous; axis of cyme greenish aging beige or tinged rose; bractlet subtending pedicel typically opposite flower, like bract in coloration but smaller; pedicel 3–5 mm long increasing to 2–3× in fruit, funnel-shaped below flower. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 7–10 mm across; **sepals** (bracteoles of some authors) 2, opposite, appressed, subequal, ± deltate to broadly ovate and cupped, 2.5–3.7 mm long increasing nearly 2× and aging roundish in fruit, outer sepal partially enclosing inner sepal and somewhat wider, green often with rose or darker tip and commonly with a deep purple-violet midvein and markings similar to bracts and bractlets, entire and not membranous on margins, obtuse at tip, persistent and appressed to fruit; **petals** (petaloid sepals of some authors) 5, broadly obovate to roundish, in range 3–5 × 3–4.5 mm, purple-violet sometimes with green near base, slightly 2-lobed to truncate at tip, withered and persistent as a cap on fruit; **stamens** 5, free; filaments 1.3–1.8 mm long, dark purple-violet but paler and flattened at flared base; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.7–1.1 mm long, bright yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow; **pistil** 1, 2–2.6 mm long; ovary superior, ovoid, 1.4–1.8 × 1.2–1.3 mm, green, smooth and without traces of valves, 1-chambered with > 25 ovules attached to free-standing central post; style to 0.4 mm long, greenish; stigma deeply 3-lobed, spreading, ± deltate but indented between tip and with margins inrolled under (revolute), ± 0.7 mm wide, whitish, conspicuously and densely papillate. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 3 valves top-to-base, 20–67-seeded, ovoid, 5–8 × 3–4 mm, with a blunt tip covered by a cap of the withered petals, 1-chambered with seeds attached to a free-standing central post along ridges by funiculi 0.2–0.3 mm long (subsessile). **Seed:** subspheroid slightly compressed side-to-side, with swelling at hilum (strophiole), in range ± 0.7 mm long, dull dark gray or dark brown, with minute whitish or light brown papillate projections; strophiole 0.2 mm, whitish. Early March–mid-April.

Native. Fleshy annual formerly reported from bluffs along the coastline of Santa Monica but not collected in range for at least half a century. *Cistanthe maritima* (formerly *Calandrinia maritima*) is not a rosette plant but instead hugs the ground with spreading procumbent shoots bearing fleshy leaves several millimeters thick. This plant has showy

purple-violet flowers that are only open for several hours. The tip of the capsule can be seen protruding from the appressed sepals and capped with the withered corolla; it splits part of the way down to release many seeds from a central post. The seeds are probably distributed locally by ants, because each has a fleshy swelling (strophiole) covering the hilum.

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