

Leptosiphon liniflorus (Benth.) J. M. Porter & L. A. Johnson, FLAX-FLOWERED

LINANTHUS. Annual, wispy, taprooted, 1-stemmed at base, branched several nodes above base to form the inflorescence, ascending to erect, 10–55 cm tall; shoots inconspicuously leafy, when in flower leafless near base, glabrous to sparsely hairy, not glandular-hairy.

Stems: cylindric, slender, ± 0.3 mm diameter, wiry, in range glabrous, aging grayish.

Leaves: opposite decussate, appearing whorled because each leaf deeply palmately 3-lobed almost to base, sessile with pair fused across node sheathing stem for ca. 0.7 mm, without stipules; blade with base ± 1.5 mm long, lobes ascending, \pm equal, linear and hemi-cylindric, in range $5\text{--}30 \times 0.3\text{--}0.8$ mm, with widely spaced, minute, upward-pointing teeth on margins, with only midrib sunken on upper surface and raised on lower surface, tomentose to sparsely pilose or glabrous at base. **Inflorescence:** cyme, terminal and axillary, open with spreading branches, many-flowered, bracteate; bract subtending lateral branchlet leaflike, typically 3-lobed but lateral lobes commonly diminutive, remotely and minutely toothed on margins, puberulent; bractlet subtending pedicel like bract but smaller; pedicel at anthesis 4–15 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 7–12 mm across; **calyx** 5-lobed, in range 3–4.3 mm long, minutely puberulent or glabrous, not glandular-hairy; tube funnel-shaped, lower portion cup-shaped or inversely conic, ca. 0.7 mm long, herbaceous, upper portion green aging reddish purple, with lobes connected by membranous panels, the panels inversely narrow-triangular, 1.4–2.5 mm long, wider than lobes at top of tube, translucent, never red-purple, often splitting during fruit development; lobes \pm equal, linear to narrowly lanceolate, the free portion acuminate, ± 1 mm long, green, puberulent or minutely hirsute and sharp-pointed at tip; **corolla** 5-lobed, widely funnel-shaped with a swollen tube, glabrous, in bud lobes overlapping but not twisted; tube barrel-shaped, ± 1 mm long, constricted below throat, white; throat in range ca. 1.5 mm long, flaring to 2 mm diameter at base of lobes, pale lavender with a diffuse yellow spot and sometimes a pair of smaller reddish to purplish spots below each lobe; lobes widely spreading at anthesis, obovate, in range 3.5–8 mm long, pale bluish violet or light violet to light purple, often with 5 or 6 darker veins diverging from throat, entire or inconspicuously uneven along top; **stamens** 5, fused to base of corolla throat alternate with corolla lobes, exserted; filaments equal, 2–4 mm long, whitish, hairy on basal 0.3 mm; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, 0.6–1.4 mm long, the sacs \pm linear, orangey yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen orangey yellow; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, unlobed ovoid to oblong-spheric, 1–1.3 mm long, green, glabrous, 3-chambered, each chamber with 2–3 ovules attached to center; style exserted, typically 3.5–6 mm long and elongating throughout the life of the flower, white, 3-branched, the stigmatic branches ascending, exserted often before corolla lobes spread, linear and often twisted, 0.7–1.5 mm long, bright yellow or greenish yellow. **Fruit:** capsule, loculicidal, dehiscent by 3 ascending valves and detaching (falling away from calyx), several-seeded, narrowly obovoid, $3\text{--}4 \times 1.5$ mm, $>$ calyx, shallowly 3-lobed in \times -section. **Seed:** irregular ellipsoid or obovoid, 1–1.3 mm long, medium brown, if 3-sided faces poorly defined, often nipplelike at base and oblique at tip, faces warty (tuberculate); gelatinous with wetted. Early May–late August.

Native. Annual occasionally encountered in disturbed grassland during dry late spring and summer conditions, when it flowers after all introduced annual grasses have already died. *Leptosiphon liniflorus* was formerly treated as a species of *Linanthus*. Its flowers are

noteworthy in having five or six fine, divergent veins on each corolla lobe, which probably serve as nectar lines for beflies and small bees that visit the flower. This plant is so wispy, and therefore not stiff, that a pollinator generally cannot land, but must hover to obtain the nectar below the yellow spots and hidden from view by hairs on the bases of the filaments.

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