Spergularia marina (L.) Besser, SALTMARSH SAND-SPURRY. Annual, sometimes halophytic and aquatic, taprooted, not rosetted, many-stemmed at base, prostrate and sprawling or decumbent, in range < 15 cm tall; shoots with only cauline leaves, and appearing tufted with 1–2 immature leaves on unexpanded axillary shoots (leaves not fascicled), shoots and inflorescences glandular-hairy but not resinous or viscid to touch. **Stems:** oval in ×-section, conspicuously swollen at and just above node, 0.6–2.5 mm wide but 1.5–2× wider at swellings, lacking a red ring below leaf bases, internodes 5–35 mm long, swellings at shoot base commonly deep purple. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, sessile, with stipules; stipules 2 per node, with pair fused and encircling stem, wide-triangular, 1.2–2(–4.5) mm long, acute to short-acuminate or 2-toothed at tip, scarious and dull translucent-white, typically not splitting, persistent; blade subcylindric to hemi-cylindric and linear, 10–42 × 0.7–2.5 mm, fleshy, entire, acute with short point at tip, venation obscure, glandular-hairy aging glabrescent. **Inflorescence:** cyme, terminal and axillary, open, many-flowered, terminal cyme commonly equally forked the lowest node and unequally forked (sympodial) above, axillary cymes sympodial, conspicuously jointed in age, flowers alternate, bracteate, glandular-hairy throughout; bracts 2 per node (= bract + bractlet), fused across node with leaflike stipules, unequal, bractlet subtending pedicel < bract, narrowly lanceolate, 2–3.5 mm long, ± fleshy; pedicel at anthesis ± 2 mm long increasing > 2× in fruit. **Flower:** bisexual, radial, 6–7 mm across, dish-shaped, horizontal; receptacle inversely conic, at anthesis ± 0.5 mm long increasing in fruit, 5-spotted with a deep purple spot between each sepal, the spots including the overlapping basal margins of adjacent sepals; **sepals** 5 (also treated as calyx lobes), ± free, spreading, narrowly ovate, at anthesis 2–4 mm long increasing to 4.5 mm in fruit and appearing to form a short tube, rounded on back and at tip, green, white-membranous on margins to tip, glandular-hairy; **petals** 5, ovate, 2.5–3 mm long, < calyx lobes, deep rose with white base, rounded at tip; **stamens** 2–5, free, subequal; filaments flattened front-to-back and tapered toward tip, 1.5–2 mm long, white; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, ± 0.5 mm long, yellow, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen yellow, copious, often discharged without flower opening; **pistil** 1, obscurely stalked; ovary superior, ovoid, 1.5 mm long, green, 1-chambered with many ovules attached to central post; styles 3, ascending, 0.4–0.6 mm long, green, papillate and stigmatic on inner face, smooth on outer surface. **Fruit:** capsule, dehiscent by 3 valves, many-seeded, ovoid, ≥ calyx, in range 4.5–5.5 mm long, with seeds attached to central post; valves erect, acute at tip, straw-colored. **Seed:** compressed-ovoid, 0.4–0.7 mm long, light brown to light reddish brown, wingless; outer surface typically minutely papillate. Late March–early September.

Naturalized. Halophytic, glandular annual occasionally found at high-tide water edge in saltwater communities, e.g., Malibu Lagoon, but also appearing in nonsaline habitats, such as water-collecting depressions in clay next to Semler Reservoir, where a dense local population can be produced. *Spergularia marina* is also known in the literature as *S. salina*, both names acknowledging this as a bona fide saltmarsh plant. Leaves are fleshy, and the shoots do not typically have well-developed leaves in the axils, so this species does not appear fascicled. Flowers of saltwater plants typically have two or three stamens, but having five stamens is a common condition in terrestrial plants. Nonetheless, this species has fewer stamens than the other species in range. On our plants, the petals of *S. marina*

are dark rose, differing from pinks and whites found elsewhere, and the seeds do not have a wing, although elsewhere in North America a partial wing may girdle the seed. In young flowers the petals originate alternate with sepals at the purple spot, and those spots, if present, are also diagnostic for only this species.
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