

1. GISEKIA Linnaeus, Mant. Pl. 2: 554. 1771.

吉粟草属 ji su cao shu

Herbs erect or prostrate, many branched, most parts usually streaked with white raphids. Leaves opposite or pseudovercillate, linear to narrowly lanceolate. Inflorescences terminal, sometimes apparently axillary, sessile or pedunculate, dichasial, dense and umbel-like or lax; bracts and bracteoles minute and scarious, sometimes obsolete. Flowers usually bisexual. Tepals 5, persistent, free, pale green to white, often flushed pink to red, rarely yellowish, herbaceous with membranous margin. Stamens 5–20, free; filaments flattened, lanceolate. Carpels (3–)5(–15), seemingly free but basally connate, each with one ovule. Fruit a cluster of reniform mericarps, usually tuberculate to ± spiny, often also smooth on same individual, or winged (not in Flora area). Seeds with curved embryo.

About seven species: five restricted to Africa, one widely distributed in tropical and subtropical Africa and Asia, one restricted to Asia; two species in China.

- 1a. Stamens 5; pedicel 3–5(–8) mm; white raphides easily seen in leaves; annual 1. *G. pharnaceoides*
1b. Stamens 12–15; pedicel 10–15 mm; white raphides not obvious in leaves; perennial 2. *G. pierrei*

1. *Gisekia pharnaceoides* Linnaeus, Mant. Pl. 2: 562. 1771.

吉粟草 ji su cao

Herbs annual, 20–50 cm, prostrate. All parts streaked with linear white raphides. Petiole poorly defined, 2–10 mm; leaf blade elliptic, lanceolate, or spatulate, 1–2.5 cm × 4–10 mm, both surfaces with many white raphides, base attenuate, apex obtuse or subacute. Inflorescences mostly sessile, apparently axillary, densely umbel-like. Flowers 5–20. Pedicel 3–5 mm. Tepals 5, green (to red), ovate, 1.5–2 mm, apex acute. Stamens 5, ca. 1 mm; filaments flattened and dilated at base. Carpels 5; styles short. Mericarp reniform, mostly spiny tuberculate, sometimes also some smooth, surrounded by persistent tepals. Seeds black, smooth, minutely pitted. Fl. summer–autumn, fr. winter.

Open, sandy habitats, often near the sea; low elevations. Hainan [Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Thailand, Vietnam; tropical and subtropical Africa; introduced in North America (SE United States)].

Collections from Iran and Pakistan with winged mericarps have been described as var. *alata* M. G. Gilbert.

2. *Gisekia pierrei* Gagnepain in Lecomte, Notul. Syst. (Paris) 3: 367. 1914.

多雄蕊吉粟草 duo xiong rui ji su cao

Herbs perennial, diffuse. Roots woody. Stems decumbent, weak; branches many, short. Leaf blade obovate-oblong, 1.5–3 cm × 3–5 mm, white raphides not obvious, attenuate to petiole, base amplexicaul. Inflorescences apparently axillary, umbel-like, 3–5-flowered; peduncle 3–5 mm. Pedicel 1–1.5 cm. Tepals 5, oblong, ca. 4 × 1.5 mm, with white raphides. Stamens 12–15; filaments very broad. Carpels 4 or 5; styles linear, ca. as long as

ovary. Fruit dark brown, with white raphides. Mericarp tuberculate. Seeds reniform. Fl. and fr. almost year-round.

Sands of seashores, open places; low elevations. Hainan [Cambodia, Vietnam].

This species is very similar to the highly variable *Gisekia africana* (Loureiro) Kuntze.

