

## 9. The Pink Family and Similar Weeds

### CARYOPHYLLACEAE, PINK FAMILY

**L**EAVES OPPOSITE (sometimes whorled), entire, rarely petioled, arising from swollen stem nodes. Flowers conspicuous with colored petals. Fruit a several-seeded capsule with a single internal chamber. Seeds with the same structure as those in *Amaranthaceae* and *Chenopodiaceae* but not circular, usually thicker and warty.

This family contains a number of weeds, most of which, however, are not major pests. Garden pinks and carnations are cultivated members of the *Caryophyllaceae*. The seeds of some are poisonous.

*Lychnis*. *Lychnis alba*, White campion, White cockle. Biennial or perennial. Leaves hairy. Flowers white. Seeds 1.2-1.3 mm. across, gray, finely warty. Common, mostly northern and eastern states, along roadsides, in waste areas, and legume seedings. Summer. The seeds are frequent in red clover seed. p63

*Silene*, Catchflies. Several species, annual or perennial, similar in appearance to white cockle, differing technically in the possession of three styles, whereas *Lychnis* has five. *Silene noctiflora* (night-flowering catchfly) is sticky-hairy. p64,  
*Silene antirrhina* (sleepy catchfly) has stems with sticky bands; flowers small, 3-4 mm. across. p65,  
*Silene cucubalus* (bladder campion), glabrous with broad leaves and inflated capsules. p66  
These plants are most common in eastern and northern part of range.

*Agrostemma*. *Agrostemma githago*, Corncockle. Winter annual or biennial. Plants hairy. Leaves narrowly oblong. Flowers purple-red. p67  
Spring and early summer. Mostly southeastern portion of range. Waste areas and winter grain. The seeds are poisonous, and their presence in screenings used for feed may result in animal poisoning. Wheat containing corn cockle seeds is subject to heavy dockage.

*Saponaria*. *Saponaria officinalis*, Bouncing bet. Plant perennial, glabrous. Flowers closely clustered, pinkish to lavender. Early summer. p68  
Roadsides, railroad rights-of-way, waste areas, mostly eastern.

In addition to the above, *Saponaria vaccaria*, Cow cockle, occurs in the northwestern portion of the North Central States, mostly in spring grain areas. The pinkish flowers are not closely clustered. The seeds are globose and, like those of corn cockle, are poisonous.

p69 *Stellaria. Stellaria media*, Chickweed. A low, creeping plant with small spoon-shaped leaves and white flowers. Seeds very small. Most common in eastern states, especially in shady or wet lawns. Summer and fall. Seeds common in lawn seed.

p69 *Cerastium. Cerastium vulgatum*, Mouse-ear chickweed. Similar to *Stellaria* but densely hairy.

#### PORTULACACEAE, PURSLANE FAMILY

p70 *Portulaca. Portulaca oleracea*, Purslane, Pussley. Plants annual, glabrous, nearly prostrate, with thick fleshy stems and leaves. Flowers small, yellow. Fruit a capsule producing numerous small, shiny, black seeds. Locally abundant in cultivated soil. Summer and fall.

#### AIZOACEAE, CARPETWEED FAMILY

p70 *Mollugo. Mollugo verticillata*, Carpetweed. Prostrate with whorled leaves and small white flowers. Locally common in sandy soil, especially southeast. Summer and fall.



PLATE 21

*Lychnis alba* 1. Mature fruit x2. 2. Pistil x3. 3. Inflorescence x2/3.

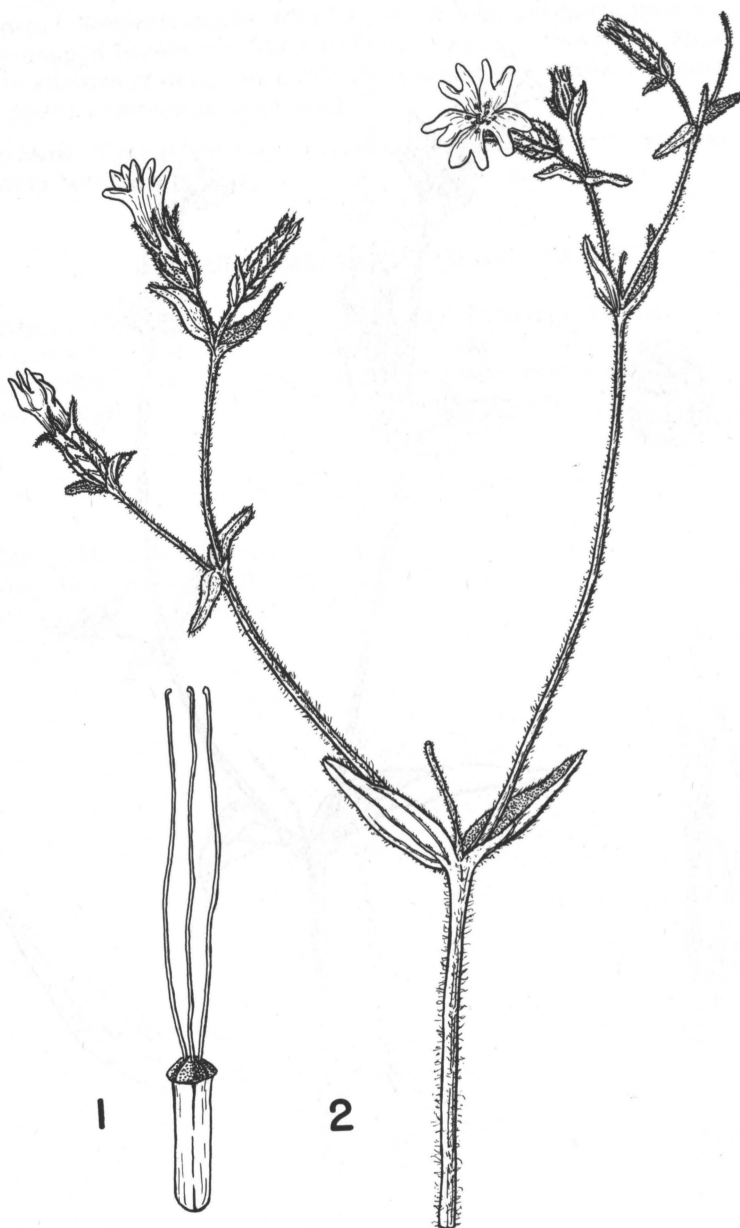


PLATE 22

*Silene noctiflora* 1. Pistil x6. 2. Inflorescence x2/3.



PLATE 23

*Silene antirrhina* Habit x2/3.



PLATE 24

*Silene cucubalus* Habit x2/3.

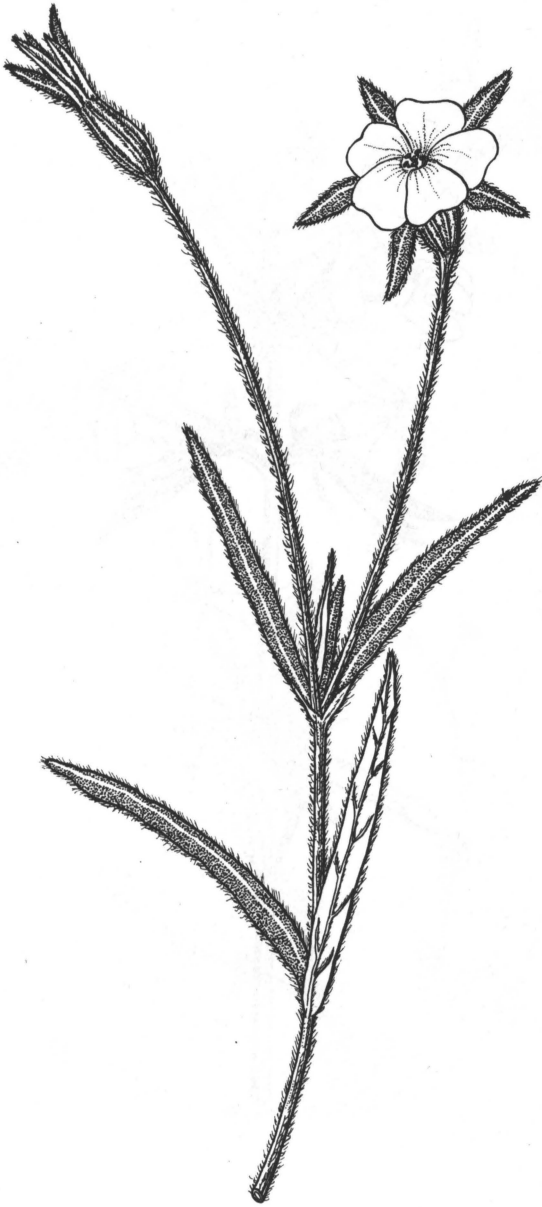


PLATE 25

*Agrostemma githago* Apex of plant x2/3.



PLATE 26

*Saponaria officinalis* Apex of plant x2/3.



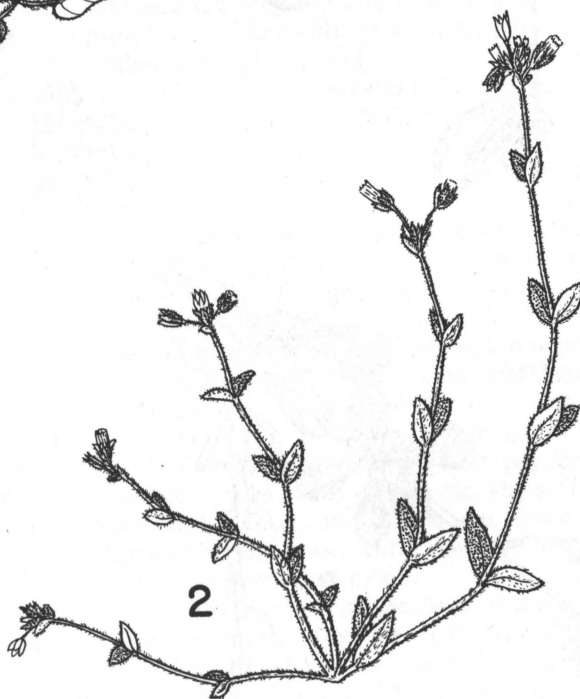


PLATE 27

*Stellaria media* 1. Habit  $\times 1 \frac{1}{3}$ .  
*Cerastium vulgatum* 2. Habit  $\times 2 \frac{2}{3}$ .

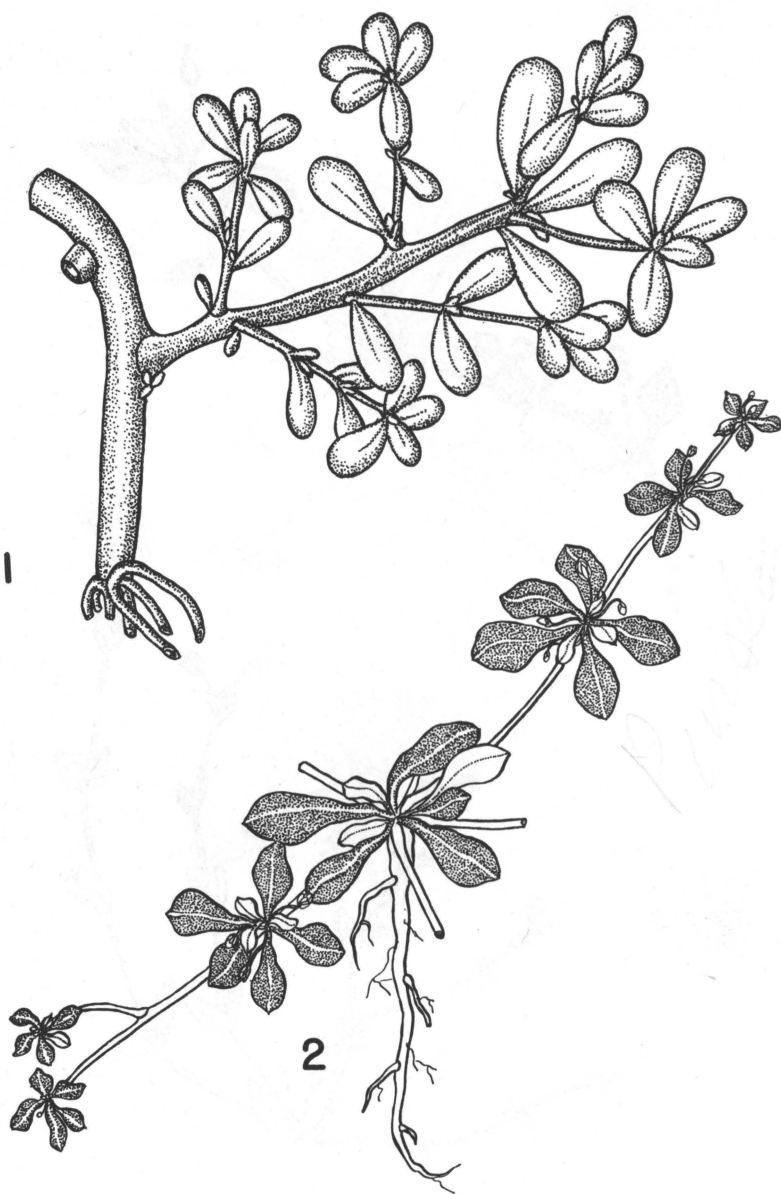


PLATE 28

*Portulaca oleracea* 1. Leafy branch x2/3.  
*Mollugo verticillata* 2. Habit x2/3.