

# Comparison of Similar Looking Plants

## *Portulaca pilosa* var. *pilosa* and *Sesuvium portulacastrum*



Scientific name:  
***Portulaca pilosa* var. *pilosa***  
(synonym *P. pilosa* subsp. *pilosa*)

Common name:  
**Rose-flowered Purslane**

Family name: **Portulacaceae**

Origin: **Brazil, West Indies**

Local Conservation Status:  
**Non-native, Naturalised**





Scientific name:  
***Sesuvium portulacastrum***

Common name:  
**Sea Purslane**

Family name: **Aizoaceae**



Origin: **Singapore, Peninsular  
Malaysia, Africa, Australia, N. & S.  
America, Asia**



Local Conservation Status:  
**Least Concern**




	<b><i>Portulaca pilosa</i> var. <i>pilosa</i></b>	<b><i>Sesuvium portulacastrum</i></b>
Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Found in sandy areas, along rivers and seashores, near cliffs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Found on sandy beaches, coastal limestone, tidal mud flats, mangrove swamps</li> <li>• Drought- and salt-tolerant</li> </ul>
Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creeping perennial herb</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creeping to suberect perennial herb</li> </ul> 


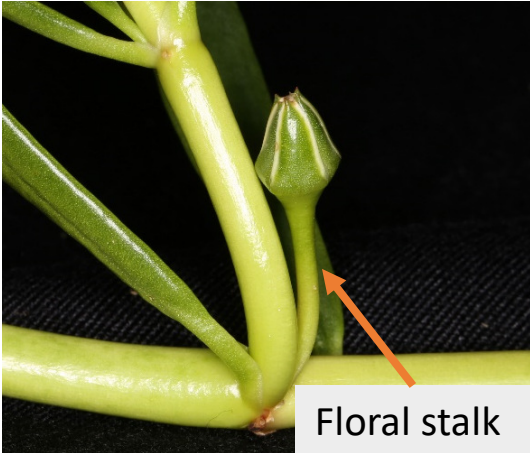
	<b><i>Portulaca pilosa</i> var. <i>pilosa</i></b>	<b><i>Sesuvium portulacastrum</i></b>
Stem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prostrate stem curves up near the tip, up to 20 cm long</li> <li>• Reddish, much branched</li> <li>• Leaves densely arranged along stem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prostrate stem curves up near the tip, up to 20 – 80 cm long and 3 – 5 mm wide</li> <li>• Green, sometimes pinkish to reddish</li> <li>• Leaves sparsely arranged along stem</li> </ul>
		
Root	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fibrous</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taproot</li> </ul>




Foliage

<p><b><i>Portulaca pilosa</i> var. <i>pilosa</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Sesuvium portulacastrum</i></b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smaller leaves (6 – 10 mm long and 1 – 2 mm wide)</li> <li>• Elliptic to linear, cylindrical leaf blade</li> <li>• Spiral to subopposite leaf arrangement</li> <li>• Succulent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger leaves (10 – 30 mm long and 2 – 5 mm wide)</li> <li>• Linear, lanceolate or oblong leaf blade</li> <li>• Opposite leaf arrangement</li> <li>• Succulent</li> </ul>
 <p>Spiral Leaf Arrangement</p>	 <p>Opposite Leaf Arrangement</p>





	<b><i>Portulaca pilosa</i> var. <i>pilosa</i></b>	<b><i>Sesuvium portulacastrum</i></b>	
Foliage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No petiole</li> <li>• White tufts of hair in leaf axils ('axillary hairs' up to 10 mm long)</li> <li>• More hairy in drier locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No petiole, paired leaves clasp the stem together at the base</li> <li>• No axillary hairs</li> </ul>	
	Axillary hairs		No axillary hairs

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Portulaca pilosa</i> var. <i>pilosa</i></b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Sesuvium portulacastrum</i></b></p>
<p>Flower</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dark pink, purple or reddish petals are obovate (2.5 – 5 mm long and 1.5 – 3 mm wide)</li> <li>• Petal tip sharply pointed (mucronate) or blunt (obtuse)</li> <li>• Green sepals with blunt tips (1 – 3 mm long and 2 – 4 mm wide)</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perianth (sepals and petals fused together) with oblong lobes, pink to purplish inside, green outside (7 – 12 mm long)</li> <li>• Lobes have obtuse tip with green, horn-like projection extending from below</li> </ul>  	

	<b><i>Portulaca pilosa</i> var. <i>pilosa</i></b>	<b><i>Sesuvium portulacastrum</i></b>
Flower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No floral stalk</li> <li>• Flowers solitary or in clusters of 2 – 10 at stem tip</li> <li>• Axillary hairs directly below flower</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Floral stalk 3 – 15 mm long</li> <li>• Solitary flower in leaf axil</li> <li>• No axillary hairs below the flower</li> </ul>
		

	<b><i>Portulaca pilosa</i> var. <i>pilosa</i></b>	<b><i>Sesuvium portulacastrum</i></b>
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellowish to olive green, glossy, egg-shaped capsule with narrow end at base or tip (5 – 6 mm long and 2 – 3 mm wide)</li> <li>• Lid length is half to two-thirds the length of the capsule, lid pops off at maturity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oblong capsule (5 mm long)</li> <li>• Wrapped in calyx (outermost flower layer) until mature, splitting longitudinally into 3 parts</li> </ul>
	 <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>Axillary hairs</span> <span>Capsule</span> </div>	 <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>Immature capsule</span> </div>
	 <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>Opened capsule</span> </div>	



	<b><i>Portulaca pilosa</i> var. <i>pilosa</i></b>	<b><i>Sesuvium portulacastrum</i></b>
Seed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kidney-shaped (~0.5 mm wide)</li> <li>• Bluish or reddish to black</li> <li>• Granulate surface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kidney-shaped (~1.5 mm wide)</li> <li>• Black, glossy</li> <li>• Smooth surface</li> </ul>
		
 <p>Seeds</p>	 <p>Seeds</p>	

## Reference

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Photos by Cerlin Ng & Horticulture Outreach (H&C) team

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