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common name	Vernal Pool Monkeyflower
scientific name	<i>Mimulus tricolor</i>
family	Scrophulariaceae (figwort)
habitat	vernal pools
size	plant 1 to 5 inches tall, flower 10 to 25 mm
fun facts	<i>Mimulus</i> means mime or mimic, an action often associated with monkeys.

**description** Member of the figwort family. The bright red-pink-and-yellow flowers are tube shaped at the base and have five irregular lobes or petals.

The Vernal Pool Monkeyflower is rarely confused with any other species in the vernal pools. *Downingia* are similarly face-shaped but are much smaller and generally blue or purple.

**life cycle** Vernal Pool Monkeyflower is an annual plant. It is **endemic** to vernal pools. It germinates as the pools dry in the spring. Vernal Pool Monkeyflower blooms in April-May.

**ecology** Vernal Pool Monkeyflower often does well in slightly disturbed areas. Look for them on old gopher mounds which were submerged under water during the winter. Whether they like the fluffier soils or the reduced competition from other plants is not certain.

**investigate** Judging from the shape and coloration of the flower, Vernal Pool Monkeyflowers are insect pollinated. Can you figure out which insects?