

Astragalus kentrophyta* A. Gray var. *douglasii

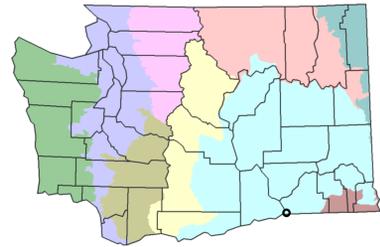
Barneby

thistle milk-vetch

Fabaceae - pea family

status: State Possibly Extirpated, Federal Species of Concern

rank: G5TX / SX



General Description: Adapted from Barneby (1964):

Sprawling, densely matted perennial herb spreading for 0.5-4 dm. Stems up to 16 cm long, branching, somewhat woody at the base, gray or white due to short, fine hairs. Leaves pinnate, 1-1.7 cm. Leaflets 5-7, rigid, linear-lanceolate, each with a small spine at the tip and hairy on both sides. Lowest stipules short, fused into a 2-toothed sheath; upper stipules lanceolate, fused at the base.

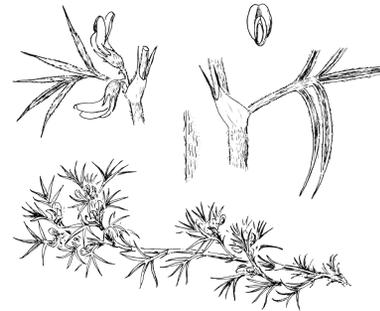


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Floral Characteristics: Racemes subsessile in the leaf axils, with 1-3 small flowers. Calyx 4.7-5.2 mm long; the tube 2.2-2.4 mm long with small spiny teeth 2.3-3 mm long. Petals whitish, the upper (banner) narrowly egg-shaped, about 5.8 x 3.8 mm. Flowers in June.

Fruits: Pods 2-seeded, lanceolate in profile, very slightly incurved, 5-5.5 x 2 mm.

Identification Tips: No other *Astragalus* in WA has spines on the leaflets and calyx. No other varieties of *A. kentrophyta* are known to occur in WA; however, var. *jessiae* and var. *implexus* occur in adjacent states. The hairs of var. *jessiae* are obviously attached at the middle; the corolla is whitish with pink- or lilac-tinged banners; the pods have 2-3 seeds. The hairs covering var. *implexus* are attached at the base, the corolla is blue or purplish, and there are 5-8 seeds per pod. In contrast, *A. kentrophyta* var. *douglasii* has hairs mostly attached at the base (but sometimes attached at the middle), a whitish corolla without pink or blue tinges, and 2 seeds per pod.

Range: Regional endemic; historical collections reported from near Walla Walla, WA.

Habitat/Ecology: On sandy ground, dunes, or eroded riverbanks at low elevations.

Comments: Not seen since 1883; this taxon is likely extinct. The original habitat of the taxon may have been flooded from the damming of the Columbia River.

References: Barneby 1964.