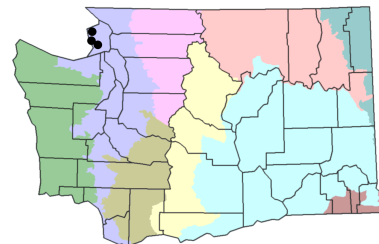


Crassula connata (Ruiz & Pav.) A. Berger et al. in
Engl. & Prantl
erect pygmy-weed
Crassulaceae - stonecrop family
status: State Threatened, BLM strategic
rank: G5 / S1S2



General Description: Adapted from Douglas et al. (1998-2002): A reddish annual herb that roots nodally. Stems hairless, ascending or erect, freely branching, 2-6 cm tall. Leaves opposite, pairs fused around the stem, entire, succulent, oblong to egg-shaped, 1.5-6 mm long.

Floral Characteristics: Flowers axillary, generally 2 per leaf pair, usually 4-parted, greenish, and sessile or short-stalked, but stalk lengthening in fruit. Sepals 4, fused at the base, lanceolate with an acute to acuminate tip. Petals whitish, less than 2 mm, not longer than the sepals. Stamens 4.

Fruits: Follicles less than 2 mm long, purplish, ovoid, ascending, and 1-2 seeded. Identifiable April to May.

Identification Tips: This species is not in Hitchcock & Cronquist (1973). *Crassula tillaea* is a nonnative weedy species that can also be found on coastal bluffs in WA, but it generally has 3 sepals, while *C. connata* generally has 4 sepals. *C. aquatica* is a native species that occurs in wetter habitats (mud flats, salt marshes); it has 1 flower per leaf pair, 6-17 seeds per follicle, and 4 rounded to obtuse sepals that are shorter than the petals. In contrast, *C. connata* usually has 2 flowers per leaf pair, 1-2 seeded fruits, and acute sepals that are longer than or equal to the petals. Sedum species are related, but are perennials, usually with 5-parted flowers and 10 stamens.

Range: Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, B.C., and San Juan Co., WA, south to OR, CA, and west to AZ and TX. It also occurs in Chile.

Habitat/Ecology: In dry areas that may be seasonally moist, including chaparral and wet to moist vernal pools on coastal bluffs. In WA *Crassula connata* is found coastally on seasonally wet cliffs, rock outcrops, and steep slopes at elevations of 4 to 30 m (15-100 ft). Associated species include moss (*Racomitrium spp.*), springbeauty (*Claytonia spp.*), hairgrass (*Aira spp.*), hairy cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), Western lady's-mantle (*Aphanes arvensis*), storks-bill (*Erodium spp.*), and spikemoss (*Selaginella spp.*).

Comments: Current threats include trampling and invasion by Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*).

References: Douglas et al. 1998-2002, vol. 2; Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 8; Hickman 1993.



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