

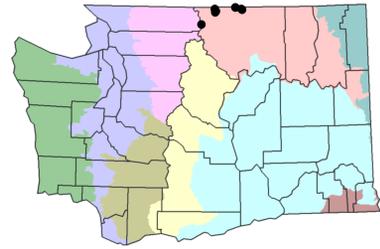
## ***Draba aurea*** Vahl ex Hornem.

golden draba

Brassicaceae - mustard family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S1S2



**General Description:** Grayish white to greenish short-lived perennial, 1-5 dm tall, with a simple to branched crown. Stems 1 to several, erect or decumbent, leafy, and hairy with a mixture of simple, forked, and cross-shaped hairs. Leaves numerous, densely hairy with mostly cross-shaped hairs. Basal leaves rosette-forming, petiolate, mostly oblanceolate, 1-5 cm long, margins entire or toothed. Stem leaves sessile or nearly sessile, ovate to oblanceolate, margins entire or finely toothed.

**Floral Characteristics:** Racemes elongate, without bracts (or the lower flowers with bracts). Pedicels 3-20 mm long; sepals 2-3.5 mm long. Petals pale to deep yellow, 4.5-6 mm long.

**Fruits:** Lanceolate silicles, 7-20 x 2-4 mm, softly hairy or hairless. Style 0.3-1.5 mm long; seeds 20-50, each about 1 mm long. Identifiable June to August.

**Identification Tips:** *Draba aureola* is similar but can be distinguished by its mature silicles, which are ovate-oblong to oblong-elliptic and usually over 4 mm broad, and its numerous stem leaves closely crowded at the stem base. In contrast, the mature silicles of *D. aurea* are narrowly to broadly lanceolate and 2-4 mm broad, and its stem leaves are not closely crowded at the stem base.

**Range:** AK southward, throughout Canada and most of the western U.S., except CA and OR.

**Habitat/Ecology:** Forested slopes, alpine meadows, and dry, relatively open, sunny areas at high elevations. In WA this taxon has been found in fellfields and dry, rocky slopes to lush meadows in the subalpine zone at elevations of 2070 to 2350 m (6800-7700 ft). Associated species include common juniper (*Juniperus communis*), Davidson's penstemon (*Penstemon davidsonii*), grouse whortleberry (*Vaccinium scoparium*), dwarf bilberry (*Vaccinium caespitosum*), varileaf cinquefoil (*Potentilla diversifolia*), kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), slender mountain sandwort (*Eremogone capillaris* var. *capillaris*), elegant Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium elegans*), Pacific lupine (*Lupinus lepidus*), and sheep fescue (*Festuca brachyphylla* ssp. *brachyphylla*).

**Comments:** Several of the known occurrences are extremely small. This species is peripheral in WA and is limited to a small geographic area. It is also rare in Manitoba, Newfoundland, Sask., Labrador, and Quebec.



photo by David Powell



photo by David Wilderman