

***Oxytropis campestris* (L.) DC. var. *columbiana* (H.**

St. John) Barneby

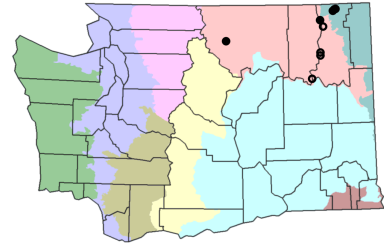
synonym: *Oxytropis columbiana* H. St. John

Columbia crazyweed

Fabaceae - pea family

status: State Endangered, BLM sensitive

rank: G5T1 / S1



**General Description:** Robust tufted perennial with a heavy taproot, 5-30 cm tall, sparsely to strongly hairy, green to grayish. Leaves pinnately compound, 3-20 cm long. Leaflets 11-17 (sometimes up to 23), broadly lanceolate-oblong to narrowly elliptic, 5-30 mm long. Stipules membranous, hairy on the lower (dorsal) surface, 5-15 mm long, adnate at least half their length.

**Floral Characteristics:** Scapes erect, 13-30 cm long; racemes 6-28 flowered. Flowers 10-20 mm long. Corolla white; keel beaked, strongly spotted with purplish blue. Banner veined, oblanceolate-ovate, 15.5-20 mm long. Calyx silky with long dark hairs, about half the length of the corolla, the tube 5-6.5 mm long, teeth linear-oblong, 1-4 mm long. Flowers May to June.

**Fruits:** Pod 1-2.5 cm long, sessile or short-stalked, almost 2-celled by intrusion of the upper suture, wall membranous, scarcely 0.5 mm thick when dried, with a beak about 5 mm long.

**Identification Tips:** *Oxytropis campestris* var. *gracilis*\* has cream-colored corollas rather than white, the keel is usually not spotted, leaves generally have 17 leaflets or more, and the herbage is not as soft-hairy as in var. *columbiana*.

**Range:** Northeastern WA, southern B.C., and northwestern MT.

**Habitat/Ecology:** Gravel banks, bars, and stony river or lake shores, along the Columbia River above the mouth of the Spokane River. Elevations in WA: 390-400 m (1290-1310 ft). This taxon is probably dependent on natural fluctuations of water level in the rivers and lakes along which it occurs.

**Comments:** Most of the WA populations have been extirpated due to habitat loss from construction of the Grand Coulee Dam. Hydrologic alteration is the largest threat to the species. Residential development along lake shores also poses a threat. This taxon is rare throughout its range.

**References:** Barneby 1952; Elisens & Packer 1980.



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