

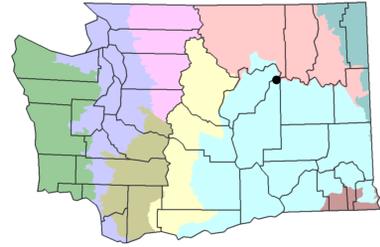
Polyctenium fremontii (S. Watson) Greene

Fremont's combleaf

Brassicaceae - mustard family

status: State Threatened, BLM sensitive

rank: G4 / S1



General Description: Adapted from Rollins (1993): Perennial herb in dense clumps, from a branching, naked caudex. Stems few to several, 5-15 cm long, simple or very rarely branched, sparsely to abundantly hairy with simple or branched hairs. Basal leaves sessile, 1-2 cm long, pinnately divided into linear divisions, with stiff hairs that are simple, forked, or branching; lobe tips often with a sharp, rigid point. Stem leaves similar, sessile, several to many, 5-12 mm long.

Floral Characteristics: Corymbose racemes, becoming elongated in fruit. Sepals oblong, hairless or hairy, 2-3 x 1-1.5 mm. Petals white to pale purple, wedge-shaped, squared off to rounded at the apex, 5-6 x 3-4 mm. Fruiting pedicels ascending, hairy or hairless, 4-6 (8) mm long.

Fruits: Siliques hairless, usually whitish waxy, linear to very narrowly oblong, gradually tapering toward the apex, 7-12 mm by less than 1.5 mm, round in cross section to somewhat compressed. Styles 1 mm long; stigmas unexpanded. Seeds 12-28 per silique, marginless, 1 mm long, attached by weak connections 1 mm long. Identifiable May to June.

Identification Tips: While there are numerous mustards with purple or white flowers and siliques with a single row of seeds, *Polyctenium fremontii* is distinctive among them in having pinnatifid leaves with stiff, linear, sharp-pointed segments.

Range: Central OR, CA, central ID, and NV. One disjunct population was recently found in WA.

Habitat/Ecology: Sagebrush deserts with gravelly clay, damp or wet meadows, shallow ponds, stony swales, dried vernal pools, and banks of vernal streamlets. Prefers somewhat compacted soils in moist areas within dry ecosystems and tolerates extremes of moisture and seasonally wet conditions. In WA it grows in shallow silt loam soil of a sparsely vegetated vernal pond, surrounded by sagebrush steppe and lithosol communities. Elevation in WA: 700 m (2300 ft).

Comments: This taxon is also rare in CA.

References: Rollins 1993.



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