

***Trichostema oblongum* Benth.**

oblong bluecurls  
Lamiaceae (Mint Family)

**Status:** State Review Group 1

**Rank:** G5SNR

**General Description:** Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1959) and Hickman (1993): *Trichostema oblongum* is a simple or branched, taprooted annual, 4 to 20 in. (1-5 dm) tall. The plant is hairy throughout with both short, flattened hairs and long, spreading hairs that are sometimes glandular. The strongly aromatic leaves are borne on very short petioles, are broadly elliptic, and may be rounded or pointed at the tip. The leaves at each node are about the same length as the stem in between the nodes and are commonly 1/2 to 2 in. (1.5-5 cm) long and 1/4 to 3/4 in. (5-20 mm) wide. The flowers are borne on one side of a short, compact, flat-topped inflorescence that occurs in the axillary buds, typical of the mint family. The leafy bracts beneath the flower are 1/16 to 3/16 in. (1.5-3 mm) long in bud. The flower tube is 1/16 to 1/3 in. (2-3.5 mm) long, slightly upcurved, and scarcely protrudes from the leafy bracts. The prominent filaments are arched and 1/8 to 1/4 in. (2.5-6mm) long. The fruit nutlets are about 1/16 in. (2-3 mm) long.

**Identification Tips:** *Trichostema oblongum* is the only species of this genus that occurs in Washington. This species can be distinguished from other members of the mint family by its primarily 1-lipped flower, a feature also shared by the genus *Teucrium*. Species of *Teucrium* are perennials, while *Trichostema* is a taprooted annual.

**Phenology:** This species blooms from July through August.

**Range:** *Trichostema oblongum* is found from British Columbia through California. It is known from Douglas, Klickitat, Spokane, and Whitman counties in Washington.

**Habitat:** This species is found in alkaline soils in vernal moist areas that often dry by summer, at elevations from 1950 to 2400 feet (600-730 m) in Washington. This species was found in Douglas County in association with needle-leaf pincushion-plant (*Navarettia intertexta*), annual hair grass (*Deschampsia danthonioides*), dense silky-bent (*Agrostis interrupta*), pygmy madia (*Madia minima*), toad rush (*Juncus bufonius*), Nevada rush (*Juncus tiehmii*), thin-leaf owl-clover (*Orthocarpus tenuifolius*), white-tip clover (*Trifolium variegatum*), short-

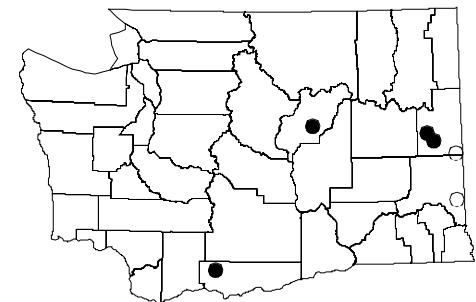
***Trichostema oblongum***

oblong bluecurls



© 1959 Reprinted by permission of the University of Washington Press.  
Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish

Known distribution of  
*Trichostema oblongum*  
in Washington



● Current (1980+)  
○ Historic (older than 1980)

## ***Trichostema oblongum***

oblong bluecurls



©2003 Christopher Christie



Katy Beck

## ***Trichostema oblongum***

oblong bluecurls

flower monkey-flower (*Mimulus brevifolius*), chaparral willowherb (*Epilobium minutum*), and big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*).

**Ecology:** Vernal moist alkaline areas in eastern Washington have a unique assemblage of species that are adapted to the extreme hydrologic variation and soil chemistry of these areas.

**State Status Comments:** This species is known in Washington from less than ten occurrences. Because *Trichostema oblongum* was recently added to the Washington rare plant list, not much is known about the degree of its rarity in the state at this time.

**Inventory Needs:** Historic sites need to be revisited. More information is needed on threats and number of populations of this species.

**Threats and Management Concerns:** Grazing may be a threat to this species.

### **References:**

Hickman, J.C. 1993. *The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California*. University of California Press, Berkeley. 1400 pp.

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1959. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 4: Ericaceae Through Campanulaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 510 pp.