

Trifolium thompsonii C.V. Morton

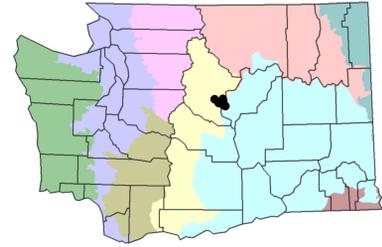
Thompson's clover

Fabaceae - pea family

status: State Threatened, Federal Species of Concern,

BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G2 / S2



General Description: Taprooted perennial with several grayish-hairy, erect stems, 2-7 dm tall. Leaves palmately compound; leaflets (3-4) 5-8, linear to lanceolate, with a pointed tip and sharply toothed margins, 2-6 cm long. Stipules 2-4.5 cm long, oblong-lanceolate, joined to the petiole for about 1/2 their length, margins nearly entire.

Floral Characteristics: Heads terminal, generally extending above the leaves, often several per plant, not subtended by involucre, 3-4.5 cm broad and nearly as long. Flowers 30-100 per head, bright reddish lavender to magenta, 18-22 mm long. Calyx 1/2-4/5 as long as the corolla; teeth linear and pointed, hairy, about twice as long as the tube. Flowers mid-May to mid-July.

Fruits: 1-seeded pods. The first seeds mature by the end of June.

Identification Tips: Within its range, *T. thompsonii* can be readily distinguished by its unique flower color and leaves with 3-8 narrow, sharply toothed leaflets.

Range: Endemic to Chelan and Douglas Co., WA, primarily west of the Columbia River.

Habitat/Ecology: Lower mountain slopes and ridges in grasslands dominated by bunchgrasses and herbs, and in adjacent open ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) and Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) woodlands. Also on alluvial fans, canyon bottoms, and the deeper soils of biscuit-swale topography. Associated species include mountain big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *vaseyana*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), and Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*). Slopes are very steep to nearly flat. Elevations: 350-1150 m (1140-3760 ft). This taxon is limited to microsites which are intermediate between dry, south-facing slopes and more mesic, shaded, heavily vegetated sites. Historically, fires probably played a role in maintaining suitable habitat for the species.

Comments: Exotic species are a significant threat; knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*) and cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) outcompete *T. thompsonii* seedlings. Agricultural conversion, livestock grazing, and illegal off-road vehicle use are also threats.

References: Canfield 1977.



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