

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

AQUILEGIA FORMOSA VAR. *FORMOSA*
CRIMSON COLUMBINE
Family: Ranunculaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.

Agency Status: None.

Heritage Rank:

Global: G5T5 State: S1

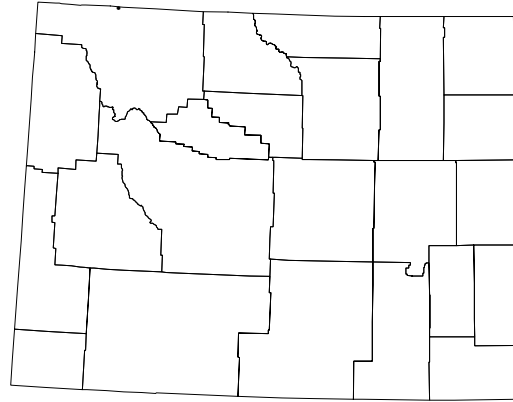
WYNDD Plant List: Peripheral (low conservation concern)

Description: Crimson columbine is a perennial forb with stems 30-100 cm tall. The basal leaves are twice to thrice ternately compound, 10-40 cm long, and shorter than the flowering stem. Leaflets are wedge-shaped to obovate and shallowly to deeply lobed. The inflorescence consists of several nodding flowers at the tip of the stem. The elliptic sepals spread at a right angle to the petals and are pale to deep red. Petals are yellow with straight, red spurs 13-21 mm long. Fruits are follicles 15-25 mm long (Dorn 1992, Hitchcock et al. 1964, Whittemore 1997).

Similar Species: *Aquilegia flavescens* has yellow sepals and spurs. *Aquilegia coerulea* has blue, purple, or white sepals and spurs that are 20-50 mm long.

Flowering/Fruiting Period: May to August.

Distribution: Var. *formosa* ranges from southern Alaska to western Alberta south to northern California, Nevada, western Utah, and NW Wyoming. In Wyoming, it is known only from the northern Absaroka Range in Park County.



Wyoming distribution of *A. formosa* var. *formosa*.

Habitat: This species is found in habitats ranging from mesic woods and moist mountain meadows to alpine slopes (Hitchcock et al. 1964, Whittemore 1997). The single known Wyoming population is found in spruce-fir forests at 8000 feet.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from a single historical occurrence in Wyoming, last observed in 1951. This population may be of hybrid origin, involving *A. formosa* and *A. flavescens*.

Abundance: Not known, but probably restricted to a small geographic area.

Trends: Not known.

Protection Status: The single known occurrence is found on public lands managed for multiple use.

Threats: Not known. The showy flowers may make this species vulnerable to over-collection.

Managed Areas: The only known occurrence is found in Shoshone National Forest.

References:

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