

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

ASTRAGALUS JEJUNUS VAR
ARTICULATUS
HYATTVILLE MILKVETCH
Family: Fabaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None. (Former C2 candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act.)

Agency Status: WY BLM Sensitive

Heritage Rank:

Global: G3T1State: S1

WYNDD Plant List: State Endemic
(High conservation priority)

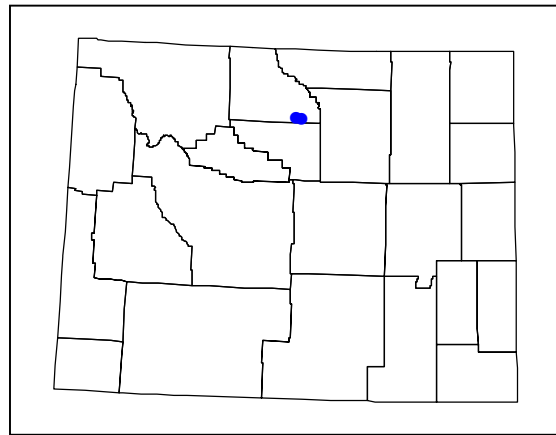
Description: Hyattville milkvetch is a low-growing, multi-stemmed perennial herb. The 1-7 cm long leaves are pinnately compound with 9-21 narrow leaflets, each less than 5 mm long and 1.5 mm wide. The terminal leaflet is jointed and not continuous with the leafstalk. The inflorescence is a 3-7 flowered raceme. Flowers are white or sometimes tinged with lavender, 5-6.5 mm long, and blunt-keeled. Fruits are papery, inflated pods 12-15 mm long mottled with red or purple (Dorn 1989, 2001; Fertig et al. 1994).

Similar Species: *Astragalus jejunos* var. *jejunos* has purplish flowers, shorter stems, and terminal leaflets continuous with the leafstalk. *A. kentrophyta* has sharp, spiny-tipped leaflets. *A. miser* var. *decumbens* has greenish-yellow, narrowly elongate pods and flowers with a sharp-tipped keel (Fertig et al. 1994).

Flowering/Fruiting Period: Flowering occurs from late May-June. Fruit produced from early June to July.

Distribution: Local endemic of the eastern rim of the Bighorn Basin and western foothills of the Bighorn Range near Hyattville, Wyoming (Big Horn County).

Habitat: Sparsely vegetated stony ridges and barren red clay slopes. Mostly found on outcrops of the Goose Egg and Chugwater formations with some beds of Tensleep Sandstone. Plants are largely absent from gypsum-rich deposits.



Wyoming distribution of *Astragalus jejunos* var. *articulatus*

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from two occurrences (consisting of 12 subpopulations) within a 5 mile area. Dorn (1989) estimated the total global population at 6750 plants of mixed age in 1989 in an area of ca 35 acres spread over 5 miles. Populations were reported as "spotty".

Abundance: Dorn (1989) estimated the total population to be ca 6750 plants in an area of ca 35 acres. Fertig and Welp (2001) estimated the total population at 5100-6500 plants in 1998-1999.

Trends: Dorn reported population as stable and vigorous in 1989. Surveys in 1998-99 found populations to be stable, although a revisit in 2000 (a drought year) suggested a short-term decline.

Protection status: All known occurrences are on public and state lands managed for multiple use. This species was formerly a C2 candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

Threats: Dorn (1989) cited no major threats under current management but recommended that the BLM avoid "major surface disturbances on or near known sites". Observations in 1999-2000 suggest that off-road vehicles and road maintenance may be detrimental. No evidence of grazing has been observed on this species. Some populations could be impacted by the replacement of existing cushion plant habitat by encroaching Utah juniper woodlands in the absence of fire (Fertig and Welp 2001).

Managed Areas:

Occurs on lands managed by the BLM Worland Field Office and state of Wyoming.

References:

Dorn, R.D. 2001. Vascular Plants of Wyoming, third edition. Mountain West Publ., Cheyenne.

Dorn, Robert D. 1989. Report on the status of *Astragalus jejunus* var. *articulatus*, a Candidate Threatened species. Prepared for the US Fish and Wildlife Service by Mountain West Environmental Services, Cheyenne, WY.

Fertig, W. 1993. U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service candidate plant species of Wyoming. Unpublished report prepared for Wyoming Weed and Pest Supervisor's meeting in Cody, WY, March 1993.

Fertig, W. 1997. Has anyone seen the Hyattville milkvetch? *Castilleja* 16(2):6.

Fertig, W. 1999. The status of rare plants in the Bighorn Landscape. Report prepared for The Nature Conservancy Wyoming Field Office by the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, Laramie, Wyoming.

Fertig, W., C. Refsdal, and J. Whipple. 1994. Wyoming Rare Plant Field Guide. Wyoming Rare Plant Technical Committee, Cheyenne Wyoming.

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