

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database

BESSEYA PLANTAGINEA
WHITE RIVER KITTENTAILS
Family: Scrophulariaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.
Agency Status: Medicine Bow National
Forest Species of Concern

Heritage Rank:

Global: GNR State: S1
Range Context: Regional Endemic/Edge
Wyoming Contribution Rank: Medium

Description: White River kittentails is a perennial herb with woolly-hairy stems up to 40 cm tall and fibrous roots. Basal leaves are 5-15 cm long, with oval to oblong leaf blades and round-toothed margins. Flowers are arranged in an elongate terminal spike with several bract-like leaves below the inflorescence. The calyx is 4-7 mm long and 4 or 5 lobed, with the sepals joined at the base for less than 1/3 of their length. Sepals are glabrous except for the densely woolly margins. The corolla is whitish (sometimes pink to purplish tinged), and 5-8 mm long. Anther filaments are not conspicuously colored. The fruit is a glabrous capsule 5-6 mm long (Dorn 2001).

Similar Species: *Besseya wyomingensis* lacks a corolla, has brightly colored (usually purplish) anther filaments, and pubescent fruits and sepals. *B. alpina* has basal leaves that are less than 5 cm long, reddish to purplish corollas, and occurs in alpine or subalpine habitats.

Flowering/Fruiting Period: Flowers from late May-early July; fruits present June-July.



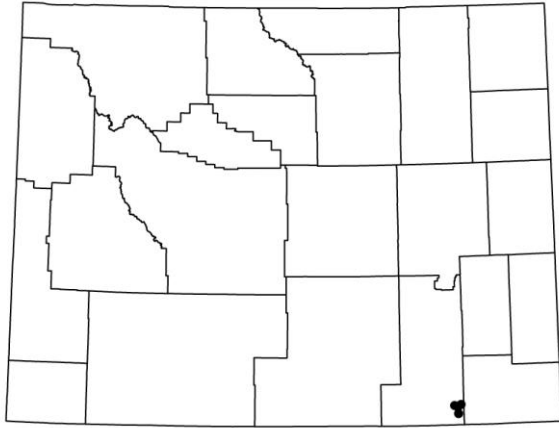
Above: *Besseya plantaginea* by B. Heidel

Distribution: Regional endemic of southeast Wyoming, Colorado, eastern Arizona, and northern New Mexico. In Wyoming it is known only from the Laramie Range in Albany County.

Habitat: Pennell (1933) reports this species from moist wooded slopes at 6000-10000 feet. Wyoming populations occur on pink Sherman granite gravel/humus soil in aspen groves and the edge of moist meadows or willow thickets at 7800-8200 feet.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from four extant populations in Wyoming, all observed since 1997 (most recently in 2007).

Abundance: Two populations surveyed in 2000 contained 125 and 1000-2000 individuals. One population surveyed in 2007 had over 10,000 plants.



Wyoming distribution of *Besseya plantaginea*.

Routt National Forest by the Rocky Mountain Herbarium, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

Packer, B. 1998. Report on a general floristic survey of vascular plants of Medicine Bow National Forest, Laramie Range and vicinity. Report prepared for Medicine Bow National Forest by the Rocky Mountain Herbarium, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

Author: Walter Fertig

Update Author: Joy Handley

Date: 08-08-12

Trends: Unknown.

Protection status: All known occurrences are on private or public lands managed for multiple use (including livestock grazing and recreation).

Threats: One occurrence is potentially threatened by recreational activity if an existing trail in the Vedauwoo area is widened.

Managed Areas: Occurs on Medicine Bow National Forest.

References:

Burke, M. 2000. Survey of selected rare plant species in the Pole Mountain area of Medicine Bow National Forest. Report prepared for University of Wyoming Botany Department.

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

Packer, B. 1999. Interim report on a general floristic survey of vascular plants of Medicine Bow National Forest: Laramie Range and vicinity. Report prepared for Medicine Bow-