

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

CRYPTANTHA GRACILIS
SLENDER CRYPTANTHA
Family: Boraginaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.

Agency Status: None.

Heritage Rank:

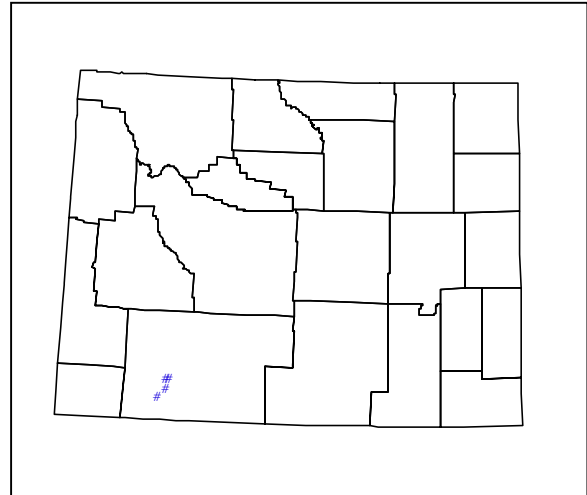
Global: G5 State: S1

WYNDD Plant List: Peripheral
(Low Conservation Priority)

Description: Slender cryptantha is a slender, erectly branched annual that has stems mostly 1-2 dm tall with dense, spreading hairs. The lower leaves are linear or narrowly oblanceolate with rounded or obtuse tips, 1.5-3 cm long x 1-3 mm broad, and minutely pustulate. The upper leaves are much reduced. The inflorescence spikes are usually dense and do not elongate much with maturity. The early-deciduous calyx reaches 2-2.8 mm at maturity and is densely white-pubescent with long, soft, ascending hairs that are often intermingled with bristle hairs. The calyx lobes are lanceolate with densely appressed tawny hairs. The nutlets are usually solitary (but sometimes 2 or 3 develop unevenly) lanceolate, 1.5-2 mm long x 0.8-1 mm broad, smooth and shiny (Welsh et. al. 1993; Cronquist et. al. 1984, Higgins 1972).

Similar Species: *Cryptantha ambigua* and *C. scoparia* have 4 coarsely roughened nutlets that are equal in size and appearance. *C. torreyana* and *C. watsonii* usually have 4 smooth nutlets that are equal in size and appearance, though rarely only 2 or 3 develop.

Flowering/Fruiting Period: April-July.



Wyoming distribution of *Cryptantha gracilis*.

Distribution: Central and S Nevada and adjacent SE California (White Mts.), N Arizona, and S Utah, extending occasionally as far as Malheur Co., Oregon, S Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado (Welsh et. al. 1993). In Wyoming, known only from the Green River Basin (around Flaming Gorge) in Sweetwater County.

Habitat: Rangewide on various substrates, mostly on dry slopes, typically in the sagebrush and pinyon-juniper zones, but sometimes in the upper part of the *Larrea* zone (Cronquist et. al. 1984). Wyoming populations occur on coarse substrates (slate) in sagebrush communities or with junipers on slopes and in washes at 6040-6900 feet.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from 4 extant occurrences in Wyoming, all of which have been discovered since 1995 (most recently in 1998).

Abundance: Census figures are not available, although populations observed by Fertig in 1997-98 were locally abundant within limited areas.

Trends: Not fully known; no trend data are available.

Protection status: All known occurrences are on public lands managed for multiple use.

Threats: Some habitat may have been lost due to flooding by Flaming Gorge Reservoir. May be vulnerable to trampling and soil erosion caused by ORV use.

Managed Areas: Found in Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (Ashley National Forest) and the BLM Rock Springs Field Office.

References:

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Higgins, L.C. 1972. The Boraginaceae of Utah. Brigham Young University Science Bulletin: Biological Series 16(3): 1-83.

Refsdal, C.H. 1996. A general floristic inventory of southwest Wyoming and adjacent northeast Utah, 1994-1995. Unpublished report prepared for the Bureau of Land Management Wyoming State Office, Bureau of Land Management Vernal Supervisor's Office, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and US Forest Service Region 4 by the University of Wyoming, Rocky Mountain Herbarium, Laramie, WY.

Ward, B.A. 1998. A floristic survey of south-central Wyoming. Masters Thesis, Department of Botany, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY.

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Author: Melanie Arnett and Walt Fertig
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