

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

CUSCUTA INDECORA VAR
NEUROPETALA
PRETTY DODDER
Family: Cuscutaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.
Agency Status: None.

Heritage Rank:

Global: G5 State: S1
WYNDD Plant List: Peripheral
Medium Wyoming Significance

Description: Pretty dodder is a rootless, twining, parasitic herb that attaches to a variety of woody and herbaceous hosts. The stems are medium to coarse, yellowish, and 0.3 to 0.6 mm wide. The flowers are loosely or tightly clumped, 5-merous, 2 to 5 mm long, and covered with tiny "bumps". The sepals are joined and have triangular to egg-shaped lobes that are 1.5 to 3 mm long. The united petals are bell-shaped and white to yellowish, with triangular to egg-shaped lobes that are 1 to 1.5 mm long. The stamens are shorter than the petal lobes, with slender filaments that are 0.7 mm long. The ovary is somewhat egg-shaped and about as long as the two, slender, 0.5 to 1.5 mm long styles. The stigmas are capitate, and the capsules are sphere-shaped with an evident depression at the top and a slight thickening so that the styles appear to be set in a shallow pit surrounded by a collar. There are usually 4 oval seeds, 1.5 to 1.7 mm long, with one or two flattened surfaces. (Welsh et al. 1993, Dorn 2001, Great Plains Flora Association 1986)

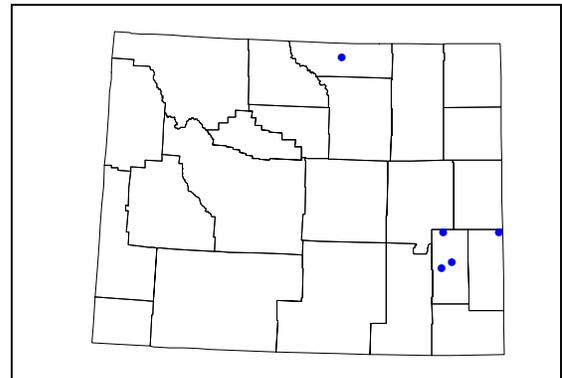
Similar Species: *Cuscuta approximata* does not have capitate stigmas and its filaments are only 0.3 mm long. *C. megalocarpa* has

somewhat beaked capsules and its sepals are broadly rounded at the tip. *C. plattensis* has capsules that are not thickened around the base of the styles, and the flowers do not have tiny "bumps".

Flowering/Fruiting Period: Flowering and fruiting occur from July through September.

Distribution: Pretty dodder is a Great Plains species. It is known from Illinois to South Dakota and from Florida to California. It is also found in Mexico and Central and South America. In Wyoming it has been collected in Platte, Goshen, and Sheridan counties.

Habitat: Pretty dodder is found on forbs and shrubs by sandy roadsides, streambanks, and lakeshores.



Wyoming distribution of *Cuscuta indecora*

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from 5 records in Wyoming, of which 3 are extant. The 2 historic occurrences are in Platte and Sheridan counties, and the 3 recent occurrences are in Platte and Goshen counties (the most recent is 1994).

Abundance: Abundance not known, but several recent observations suggest it may be more widespread than once thought.

Trends: Not known.

Protection status: One occurrence is on Glendo State Park. All others are on public or private lands managed for multiple use.

Threats: *Cuscuta* spp. are considered agricultural pests and may be subject to eradication efforts.

Managed Areas: One occurrence is in Glendo State Park. One other population may occur on lands managed by the BLM Caspar Field Office. All other known occurrences are on state or private lands.

References:

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

Great Plains Flora Association. 1986. Flora of the Great Plains. Univ. Kansas Press, Lawrence, KS.

Welsh, S.L., N.D. Atwood, S. Goodrich, and L.C. Higgins, (eds). 1993. A Utah Flora, second edition, revised. Brigham Young University Print Services, Provo, UT.

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