

-State Species Abstract-  
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

*ERIGERON ALLOCOTUS*  
BIGHORN FLEABANE  
Family: Asteraceae

Status:

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

Global: G3 State: S2S3  
WYNDD Plant List: Regional endemic  
(Medium Conservation Priority)

Description: Bighorn fleabane is a multi-branched perennial herb with leafy stems 13-18 cm tall. Stems and leaves are conspicuously pubescent with coarse, spreading hairs. The leaves may also be finely glandular and are divided at the tip into 3-5 teeth or linear segments. Basal leaves are 1.5-3 cm long, while stem leaves are mostly under 1 cm and simple to 3-toothed. Flowering heads are small and numerous, each having a 4-5 mm high involucre of glandular and hirsute bracts, 25-40 white to pinkish ray flowers (3-6 mm long), and a yellow-flowered disk 6-9 mm wide (disk corollas 2-3.5 mm long). The pappus consists of 12-20 bristles 2-2.5 mm long. Fruits are 2-nerved achenes with short stiff hairs (Dorn 1992, Cronquist 1947, Blake 1937; Marriott and Jones 1989).

Similar Species: *Erigeron compositus* has short pubescence, leafless (or nearly so) stems, leaf blades cleft into 5-10 narrow segments, and often has fewer and larger flowers. *E. pinnatisectus* has pinnately-divided leaf blades, purple ray flowers, leafless stems, and is not known from the Bighorn Range (Dorn 1992).

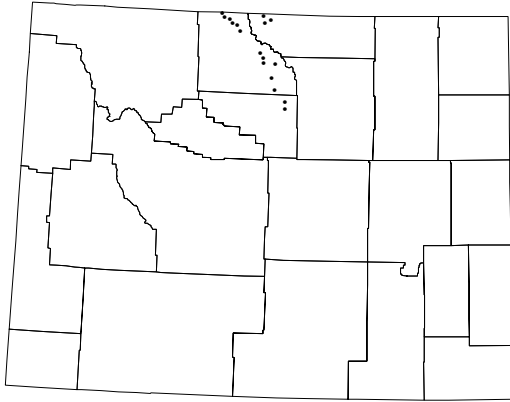


Above and below: *Erigeron allocotus* by Walter Fertig.



Flowering/Fruiting Period: May-July.

Distribution: Regional endemic of the Bighorn and Pryor ranges and adjacent foothills in north-central Wyoming and south-central Montana. In Wyoming, this species is restricted to the Bighorn Range and Bighorn Canyon area in Big Horn, Sheridan, and Washakie counties.



Wyoming distribution of *E. allocotus*.

**Habitat:** Bighorn fleabane is restricted to xeric, calcareous sites on cliff faces, ledges, talus slopes, and rock outcrops. Populations on TNC's Tensleep Preserve are often found on redbed soils. *E. allocotus* occurs in a variety of communities dominated by Utah juniper, mountain mahogany, or sagebrush, but is typically restricted to sites with low vegetative cover.

**Occurrences in Wyoming:** Known from 17 extant occurrences in Wyoming, 7 of which have been discovered or relocated since 1993 (most recently in 1999). Many of these populations, especially on the west side of the Bighorns, are in close proximity and could be reasonably combined into fewer, more extensive biological populations.

**Abundance:** Populations range from small and localized to extensive and abundant, depending on the amount and suitability of available habitat. The largest known populations in the state number between 10000-40000 individuals (Bighorn Canyon NRA, Trapper Canyon, Tensleep Preserve).

**Trends:** Populations that have been surveyed appear to be stable.

**Protection status:** One large population is protected within The Nature Conservancy's Tensleep Preserve and 7 others are found within the Spanish Peak Karst and Little Mountain ACECs, Shell Canyon Research Natural Area, and Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. One population is also found within a TNC conservation easement on the east slope of the Bighorn Range. Six populations are found in the potential Elephant Head, Tensleep Canyon, and Dry Fork Research Natural Areas and the Medicine Lodge and Trapper Peak Wilderness Study Areas. All other occurrences are on public lands managed for multiple use.

**Threats:** Threats low overall, primarily from habitat disturbance (road construction, trampling). Plants usually found in relatively inaccessible areas with low forage, making grazing a minor threat.

**Managed Areas:** Occurs on lands managed by Bighorn National Forest, Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, and the BLM Cody and Worland Field Offices.

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