

-State Species Abstract-  
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

*PACKERA CROCATATA*  
[*SENECIO CROCATUS*]  
SAFFRON GROUNDSEL  
Family: Asteraceae

Status:

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

Heritage Rank:

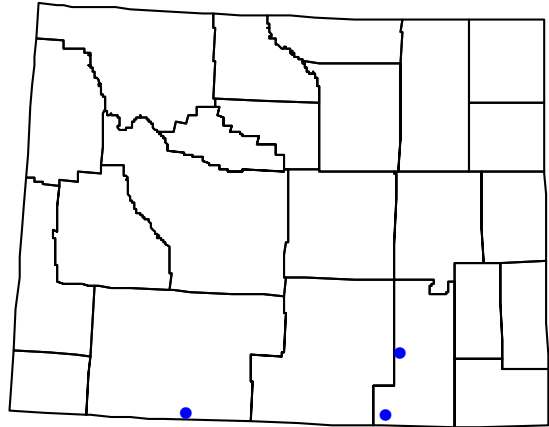
Global: G4 State: S1?  
WYNDD Plant List: Regional endemic  
(Medium conservation priority)

Description: Saffron groundsel is a perennial forb with 1 to few glabrate stems 20-70 cm tall from a few-branched caudex. Basal and lower stem leaves have round-toothed, lobed, or entire blades 1-8 cm long and 1-4 cm wide with truncate to rounded bases that abruptly join long petioles. Upper stem leaves are irregularly lobed, sessile to clasping, and become progressively reduced in size. Flower heads number 10-30 and are borne in an erect inflorescence. The involucre is 4-8 mm long and consists of 13-21 purple-tinged bracts. Ray flowers are bright orange to orange-red (sometimes fading to yellow when pressed and dried). Fruits are glabrous achenes with white pappus (Cronquist 1994; Harrington 1954; Welsh et al. 1993).

Synonyms: *Senecio crocatus*.

Similar Species: *Packera subnuda* (*Senecio cymbalarioides*) typically has 1 or 2 flowering heads per stem and occurs in alpine or subalpine meadows. *Packera debilis* and *P. pauciflorus* have orange disk flowers but lack rays. Other *Senecio* species in Wyoming have yellow rays, persistent

stem or leaf pubescence, or leaf blades that taper gradually to the petiole (Dorn 1992).



Wyoming distribution of *P. crocatus*.

Flowering/Fruiting Period: Flowers from late June to July, fruits produced from July-August.

Distribution: Regional endemic of southern Wyoming, northeastern Utah, and western Colorado. In Wyoming, this species is known from the Medicine Bow Range and foothills of the Laramie and Washakie basins in Albany and Sweetwater counties.

Habitat: In Wyoming, found in mid elevation montane wet meadows, streamsides, and slopes at 7000-9000 feet.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from 3 historical records in Wyoming, all observed between 1896-1914. Recently reported from several additional sites in Wyoming, but confirmation is needed.

Abundance: Unknown; may be extirpated in state.

Trends: Unknown; may be extirpated.

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

Threats: May be impacted by grazing or disturbances in riparian habitats.

Managed Areas: Found on lands managed by Medicine Bow National Forest and the BLM Rock Springs Field Office.

Notes: *Many Wyoming specimens show possible hybrid influences from Senecio streptanthifolius according to Dr. Ted Barkley.*

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