

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

PARONYCHIA PULVINATA
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NAILWORT
Family: Caryophyllaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.

Agency Status: None.

Heritage Rank:

Global: G3 State: S1

WYNDD Plant List: Regional endemic
(Medium conservation priority)

Description: Rocky Mountain nailwort is a cushion-like perennial herb with stems 3-5 cm tall. The densely matted, thick leaves are bright green, 3-6 mm long, and oval to elliptic with blunt tips. Associated with the leaves are large, persistent, silvery-translucent stipules 2-4 mm long. The greenish-yellow flowers are solitary, apetalous, and embedded among the leaves. Flowers have 5 sharp pointed sepals and 5 stamens (Fertig 1993, Harrington 1954).

Similar Species: *Paronychia sessiliflora* has sharp-pointed leaves and is found at lower elevations. Vegetative specimens of *Phlox pulvinata* have broader, whitish-green leaves with conspicuously ciliate margins. Vegetative specimens of *Minuartia obtusiloba* have yellowish-green leaves and lacks silvery stipules. *Silene acaulis* in vegetative condition has grass-green leaves that are typically long and narrow and are finely saw-toothed on the margins.

Flowering/Fruiting Period: July-August.

Distribution: Regional endemic of SE Wyoming, C Colorado, and N New Mexico. In Wyoming, known only from the



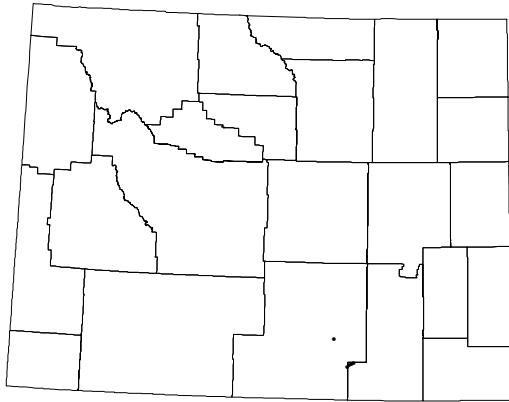
Above and Below: *Paronychia pulvinata* by Walter Fertig.



Medicine Bow Range in Albany and Carbon Counties.

Habitat: Cushion plant communities on windy alpine boulder slopes, fellfields, and gravel beds interspersed among *Geum rossii* turf mats at 10150-12000 feet. Found in gravelly-sandy soils in small ledges and cracks within quartz or sandstone.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from 5 occurrences in Wyoming, several of which cover a relatively large geographic area.



Wyoming distribution of *Paronychia pulvinata*.

Abundance: Populations are generally small and restricted to specialized microhabitats.

Trends: Populations are assumed to be stable, although no long-term trend data are available.

Protection status: One occurrence is found within the Medicine Bow Peak Special Botanical Area on Medicine Bow National Forest. All other occurrences are found on public lands which receive no special management.

Threats: The plant's matted growth form protects it from grazing and trampling impacts.

Managed Areas: Known populations are found on Medicine Bow National Forest (Brush Creek and Laramie Ranger Districts) and BLM Rawlins Field Office.

References:

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