

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

POLYGONUM SPERGULARIIFORME
FALL KNOTWEED
Family: Polygonaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.

Agency Status: None.

Heritage Rank:

Global: G5T4? State: S1

WYNDD Plant List: Peripheral

Medium Wyoming Significance

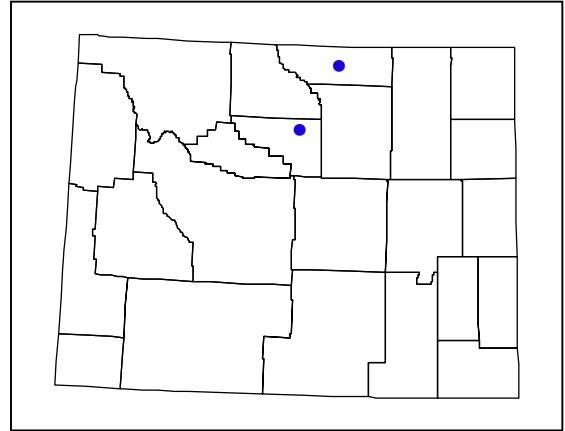
Description: Fall knotweed is a single-stemmed or (usually) branched annual herb with a slender taproot and wiry, sharply-angled stems. Leaves are linear to narrowly oblong, mostly 1-3 cm long, and with membranous, deeply-incised stipules. Flowers are small, and 1-4 are crowded into the axils of upper leaves and bracts. Each flower has 5 pink perianth parts which are 3-5 mm long and united for 1/4-1/3 of their length, and which are bisected by a bright green stripe. Stamens number 8. Fruits are tiny, black, shiny, smooth achenes (Hitchcock et al. 1964).

Similar Species: *Polygonum douglasii* has flowers (at least some) that droop.

P. sawatchense has flowers which grow nearly to the base of the plant, and the bracts conspicuously exceed the the flowers.

P. watsonii has yellow to brown achenes which are not shiny, and the plant is usually less than 1 dm tall. *P. kellogii* has 3 stamens and the floral bracts are white-margined (Dorn 2001, Hitchcock et al. 1964).

Flowering/Fruiting Period: June through September.



Wyoming distribution of *Polygonum spergulariforme*

Distribution: British Columbia south to California, east to ID, WY and, reportedly, Colorado (Hitchcock et al. 1964, Harrington 1953). In Wyoming, known from the eastern edge of the Bighorn Mountains and western edge of the Powder River Basin (Sheridan and possibly Johnson counties; the latter is unmappable) and Bighorn Basin (Washakie County).

Habitat: Gravelly or sandy hills and plains at 3500-5000 ft.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from one extant record (last observed in 1980) and two vague historical reports in Wyoming (one is unmappable).

Abundance: Unknown.

Trends: Unknown.

Protection status: All known extant populations are on public or state lands managed for multiple use. Historical populations may be from private or state lands.

Threats: Not known.

Managed Areas: Occurs in the BLM Worland Field Office.

References:

Beauvais, G.P., W. Fertig, and G.P. Jones. 2000. Rare species and the vegetation of Washakie County, Wyoming. Report prepared for the Washakie County planner by the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, Laramie, WY.

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

Fertig, W. 1999. The status of rare plants in the Bighorn Landscape. Report prepared for The Nature Conservancy Wyoming Field Office by the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, Laramie, Wyoming.

Harrington, H. D. 1954. Manual of the Plants of Colorado. Sage Books, Chicago, IL.

Hickman, J.C., ed. 1993. The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Hitchcock, C.L. and A. Cronquist. 1964. Pt. 2. Salicaceae to Saxifragaceae. In: Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest. University of Washington Publications in Biology 17(1): 1-914.

Author: Stuart Markow and Walter Fertig
Updated: 12-10-01