

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

SALIX MYRTILLIFOLIA VAR.
MYRTILLIFOLIA
MYRTLELEAF WILLOW
Family: Salicaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.
Agency Status: USFS Region 2: Sensitive

Heritage Rank:

Global: G5T5 State: S1
WYNDD Plant List: Disjunct (Medium
conservation priority)

Description: Myrtleleaf willow is a low-growing shrub, often with trailing stems, usually less than 30 cm tall. The finely-toothed, hairless leaves are equally green above and below and have petioles less than 5 mm long. Catkins are produced on leafy stalks and have persistent, dark, hairy flower bracts. Pistillate catkins are 1.3-4.2 cm long and have hairless, short-styled capsules. Staminate catkins are 1-2 cm long and borne on separate plants (Fertig et al. 1994; Fertig and Jones 1992; Porsild and Cody 1980; Dorn 1992).

Similar Species: *Salix boothii* is a taller shrub, has sparsely hairy leaves, and petioles over 5 mm long. *S. wolfii* has silvery-hairy leaves. *S. eastwoodiae* has young leaves with conspicuously glandular-toothed margins (Dorn 1992; Fertig and Jones 1992; Fertig et al. 1994).

Flowering/Fruiting Period: June-July.

Distribution: Alaska to Newfoundland, south to Alberta and Manitoba. Disjunct in the northern Absaroka Mountains of Wyoming (Park County) and central Colorado.

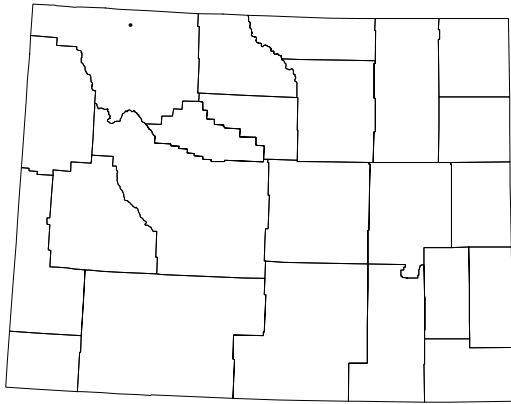


Above: *Salix myrtillifolia* var. *myrtillifolia* by Walter Fertig (from Fertig et al. 1994).

Habitat: Lake and stream banks, floodplain thickets, muskegs, bogs, and moist white spruce forests. Wyoming populations occur at 6600 feet.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from a single population in Wyoming, last surveyed in 1992.

Abundance: The single population is extremely small and limited to an area of less than 5 acres. Only pistillate individuals have been found in the Wyoming site, indicating that the colony may not be capable of sexual reproduction (without pollen-producing staminate plants in the colony, no fruits or seeds can be produced).



Wyoming distribution of *S. myrtilifolia* var. *myrtilifolia*.

Trends: Trend data are not available, but in the absence of evidence of sexual reproduction, the long-term trends for the species in Wyoming are probably poor. The colony may be able to maintain itself in the short term, however, through asexual reproduction. It is not known how long this colony has been present (it could potentially be a glacial relict).

Protection Status: The single Wyoming occurrence is protected within the Swamp Lake Special Botanical Area.

Threats: May be threatened by browsing from native species and trespass cows and horses. The apparent lack of staminate individuals may prevent sexual reproduction and further spread into new microsites.

Managed Areas: Occurs only in Shoshone National Forest in Wyoming.

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