

-State Species Abstract-  
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

*SILENE KINGII*  
KING'S CAMPION  
Family: Caryophyllaceae

Status:

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

Heritage Rank:

Global: G2G4Q State: S1  
WYNDD Plant List: Regional endemic  
(Medium conservation priority)

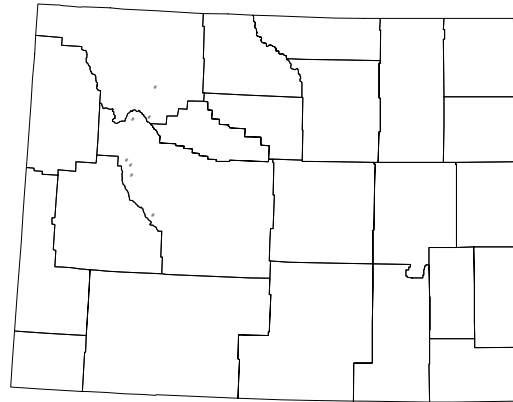
Description: King's campion is a low-growing, densely glandular perennial herb with stems 5-12 cm tall arising from a branched rootstalk. Basal leaves are petioled with linear-lanceolate blades 4-10 cm long. Hairs on the basal leaves are non-glandular and point downwards in Var. *kingii* or are spreading and gland-tipped in the undescribed Var. *novum*. Stem leaves are opposite, sessile, and 1-6 cm long. Flowers are solitary (occasionally paired) at the top of the stem, 10-20 mm long, and often nodding when young. Sepals are fused into an inflated, urn-shaped glandular calyx with 10 purplish veins. Petals are white, pink, or purple, with 2-lobed blades that taper to a narrow base and are largely concealed within the sepals. The fruit is a capsule 10-18 mm long opening by 5-12 teeth (Welsh 1993, Dorn 1992; Scott 1997).

Synonyms: *Lychnis apetala* var. *kingii*;  
*Gastrolychnis kingii*; *Melandrium apetalum*.

Similar Species: *Silene hitchguirei* has basal leaves with long, crinkly, non-glandular hairs 0.2-0.5 mm long and wing-margined seeds. *S. drummondii* usually has 2 to several flowers with a non-inflated calyx and stems over 20 cm tall (Dorn 1992).

Flowering/Fruiting Period: June-August.

Distribution: Var. *kingii* is a regional endemic of NE Utah, NW Wyoming, and Colorado. In Wyoming, it is known from the Absaroka and Wind River ranges in Fremont and Park counties. Var. "*novum*" is apparently endemic to the Absaroka and Wind River ranges in Wyoming. If these taxa are recognized as varieties of *Lychnis* [*Silene*, *Melandrium*] *apetala*, our populations are disjunct from the core of the species' range in Alaska and northern Canada.



Wyoming distribution of *Silene kingii*.

Habitat: Igneous, or metamorphic talus slopes and rock outcrops in alpine meadows or limestone ridges within spruce-fir forests in the upper subalpine zone (10200-11600 feet).

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from 7 extant occurrences in Wyoming, 3 of which have been observed since 1996.

Abundance: Not known.

Trends: Not known.

Protection Status: 5-6 populations are found in designated wilderness areas (Popo Agie, Fitzpatrick, and Washakie). One occurrence is also in the Carter Mountain ACEC and

another is within the potential Arrow Mountain Research Natural Area.

Threats: Threats are probably low given the rugged, high elevation habitat of this plant. Possible impacts from sheep grazing or recreation activity have not been studied.

Managed Areas: Occurs on Shoshone National Forest and BLM Cody Field Office.

References:

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