

-State Species Abstract-
-Wyoming Natural Diversity Database-

VACCINIUM MYRTILLUS VAR.
OREOPHILUM
DWARF BILBERRY
Family: Ericaceae

Status:

US Fish & Wildlife Service: None.

Agency Status: None.

Heritage Rank:

Global: G5T? State: S1

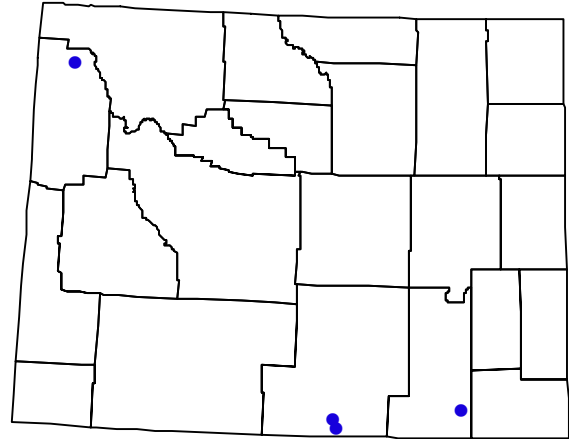
WYNDD Plant List: Peripheral (Low conservation priority)

Description: Dwarf bilberry is a low-growing, rhizomatous shrub, 2-4 dm high. The stems are highly branched, strongly angled, and usually sparsely hairy on younger growth. Leaves are egg-shaped, 1-3 cm long, light green, and sharply toothed along the whole margin. The urn-shaped pink flowers are 4-6 mm long and occur singly in the leaf axils. Mature fruits are bluish to dark red berries (Hitchcock and Cronquist 1969; Dorn 1977).

Similar Species: *Vaccinium scoparium* has smaller flowers (ca 4 mm long), smaller and narrower leaves (typically 4-15 mm long and less than 8 mm wide) and dense, stiffly upright branches that impart a broom-like appearance to the plant. *V. occidentale* has 1-4 flowers per axil, smooth leaf edges and round rather than angled stems. *V. cespitosum* has leaves which are widest above the middle and lack teeth at the base and round to slightly angled twigs.

Flowering/Fruiting Period: May-August.

Distribution: Occurs from southeastern British Columbia to central Oregon, Wyoming New Mexico and Arizona. In



Wyoming distribution of *Vaccinium myrtillus* var. *oreophilum*.

Wyoming it is known only from the Laramie Range, Sierra Madre and Yellowstone Plateau in Albany, Carbon, and Teton counties.

Habitat: Open, moist coniferous forest in mountains (Hitchcock and Cronquist 1959). Wyoming populations are found in Lodgepole pine-Aspen woods, often with *Vaccinium scoparium*, at 7750-10000 feet.

Occurrences in Wyoming: Known from 3 extant occurrences in Wyoming, most recently observed in 1994. Also known from one historical literature reference, predating 1942.

Abundance: Not known.

Trends: Not known.

Protection status: One historical record is protected within Yellowstone National Park.

Other known populations occur on public lands managed for multiple use.

Threats: May be threatened by habitat loss due to logging or recreational development. Some populations may consist of sterile hybrids and may have difficulty persisting.

Managed Areas: Occurs on lands managed by Medicine Bow National Forest and Yellowstone National Park.

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