Calochortus macrocarpus  
Douglas var. maculosus  

sagebrush mariposa-lily

Liliaceae - lily family

status: State Endangered, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5T2 / S1

General Description: Perennial herb 2-5 dm tall, with an erect, stout, usually unbranched stem arising from a basal bulblet. Leaves basal, linear, channeled, becoming inrolled and curled at the tip.

Floral Characteristics: Bracts 2 or more, linear, with a pointed tip, unequal. Flowers 1-3, showy, erect. Sepals narrowly lanceolate, tapering to a long sharp point, 4-5 cm, generally longer than the petals. Petals 4-6 cm, obovate, white or nearly so, with a longitudinal green stripe on the outer surface. The gland on the inner surface of the petal is triangular-oblong, surrounded with a broad, continuous, fringed membrane and densely covered with slender hairs. Above the gland, the inner petal has a conspicuous transverse reddish purple band and is bearded with slender hairs. Stamens 6, anthers linear, about 1 cm, longer than the filaments.

Fruits: Capsules linear-lanceolate with a pointed tip, 3-angled but not winged, erect, 4-5 cm. Seeds flat, inflated, straw-colored. Flowers and fruits July to August.

Identification Tips: Distinguished from C. macrocarpus var. macrocarpus by its white petals, conspicuous reddish purple band on inner petals above the gland, and narrow, 3-sided fruits.

Range: Southeastern corner of WA and adjacent ID and OR.

Habitat/Ecology: Undisturbed, dry habitats in rocky, basaltic substrates on hillsides, rock outcrops, cliff bands, and grasslands on steep slopes. Associates include ponderosa pine (Pinus ponderosa), arrowleaf balsamroot (Balsamorhiza sagittata), Idaho fescue (Festuca idahoensis), bluebunch wheatgrass (Pseudoroegneria spicata), yarrow (Achillea millefolium), and Sandberg bluegrass (Poa secunda). Elevations in WA: 300-1370 m (1000-4480 ft).

Comments: This taxon is rare throughout its range: the estimated total population in WA is less than 1,000 plants. Both varieties of C. macrocarpus are highly palatable to livestock and easily extirpated from heavily grazed areas. However, var. maculosus prefers rugged, remote terrain, which protects it from some grazing threats. Some populations are also threatened by invasive weeds, including yellow star-thistle (Centaurea solstitialis) and St. John's-wort (Hypericum perforatum).