

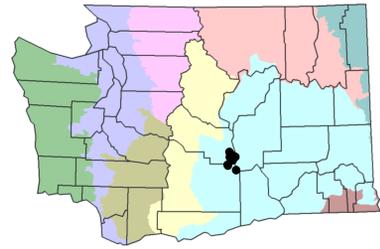
Collomia macrocalyx Leiberg ex Brand

bristle-flowered collomia

Polemoniaceae - phlox family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive

rank: G3G4 / S1



General Description: Annual, up to 1 dm tall, with fine, short, soft hairs below; rough to the touch and slightly sticky above. Stems branched when well developed; the main stem and branches terminate in dense flower clusters with leafy bracts. Leaves entire; those below the inflorescence few, sometimes deciduous, with petioles and small, elliptic blades, sometimes opposite. Leaves subtending flower clusters linear, 1-3 cm x 1-2 mm, tapering to a slender point.

Floral Characteristics: Flowers in terminal headlike clusters. Sepals fused into a calyx tube with 5 lobes; the lobes elongate, narrow, firm, tapered to a sharply pointed tip, unequal, the longer ones (4) 5-11 mm long in fruit. Corolla blue, fused into a tube, about 1 cm long; lobes 5, 2-2.5 mm long. Stamens 5; filaments short, less than 1 mm long, somewhat unequally inserted a little below the recess between the lobes. Flowers late May to early June.



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
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Fruits: Capsules.

Identification Tips: Occurs with several other *Collomia* species within its range; it is distinguished by the long, sharply pointed, unequal calyx lobes, blue flowers, and stamens inside the corolla tube at different levels.

Range: OR, ID, and WA.

Habitat/Ecology: Dry open places east of the Cascades; on talus, rock outcrops, sagebrush slopes, and lithosols. Vegetation is generally sparse and species diversity is low. Associates include big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), stiff sagebrush (*Artemisia rigida*), purple sage (*Salvia dorrii*), snow buckwheat (*Eriogonum niveum*), rock buckwheat (*E. sphaerocephalum*), thyme-leaf buckwheat (*E. thymoides*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), threadleaf phacelia (*Phacelia linearis*), grand collomia (*Collomia grandiflora*), and Carey's balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza careyana*). Elevations in WA: 250-650 m (870-2130 ft). As a winter annual, seeds germinate after autumn rains. The density and size of populations varies widely each year, due to differences in climatic conditions. Weedy nonnative annuals are common competitors in the microhabitats occupied by *C. macrocalyx*.



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Comments: Threats to this species include competition from cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and other nonnative plants, livestock grazing, off-road vehicle use, and military training. It is also rare in OR.



photo by Bureau of Land Management