

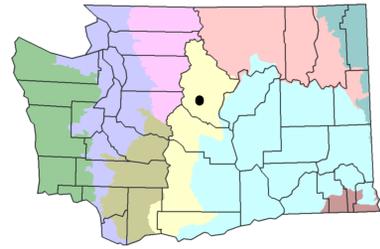
Hackelia venusta (Piper) H. St. John

showy stickseed

Boraginaceae - borage family

status: State Endangered, Federal Listed Endangered

rank: G1 / S1



General Description: Adapted from Gentry & Carr (1976): Short perennial, 2-4 dm tall; stems many from a slender taproot, leafy, erect or ascending, with spreading, small, coarse hairs below the middle, becoming appressed above. Leaves with spreading, coarse, stiff hairs and cilia. Most stem leaves are 2.5-5 cm x 3-7 mm; lanceolate, narrowly elliptic, or narrowly oblong; sessile; and reduced only slightly upward to the inflorescence, then reduced to small bracts.

Floral Characteristics: Pedicels long, 8-10 mm in fruit; calyx 3.5-4.3 mm long, linear-lanceolate. Corolla with a slender tube and abruptly spreading, flattened limbs; limbs white or washed with blue, 18-22 mm wide. Small crests in the throat of the corolla are showy, truncate or slightly notched at the tip.

Fruits: Nutlets generally 4, 3.8-4.3 mm long, ovate; dorsal surface warty and rough with small, stiff hairs and 8-14 small but distinct intramarginal prickles. Marginal prickles with confluent bases, forming a broad cuplike border around the main body of the nutlet. Identifiable May to July.

Identification Tips: Other *Hackelia* taxa occurring in central WA are generally taller, have longer leaves, more basal leaves, and smaller flowers. *H. hispida* var. *disjuncta* is taller and has yellowish white flowers. *H. micrantha* has blue flowers. *H. diffusa* var. *arida* occurs in similar habitats but has white to cream flowers with narrower corolla limbs (8-13 [18] mm wide), and is taller than *H. venusta*.

Range: Local endemic of the Wenatchee Mts., WA.

Habitat/Ecology: Dry, loose granitic sand and crevices in granite or talus; restricted to sites with low vegetative cover from unstable slopes and periodic fires. Elevations: 450-2250 m (1500-7400 ft). Slopes range from 25-70 degrees.

Comments: This taxon has been in decline for a number of years. Fire suppression results in increased competition, shading, and slope stabilization, which are detrimental to *H. venusta*. Fire can increase habitat quality and population density, but may also lead to excessive slope instability, resulting in large slides burying much of the existing populations. Highway maintenance and reconstruction are also threats.

References: Croft et al. 1997; Gentry & Carr 1976.

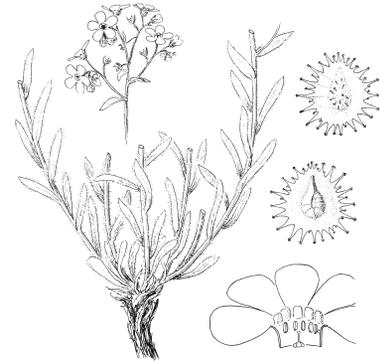


Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
©1959 University of Washington
Press



photo by Joe Arnett



photo by Joe Arnett