

***Juncus uncialis* Greene**
inch-high rush
Juncaceae (Rush Family)

Status: State Sensitive
Rank: G3G4S2

General Description: Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1969) and Ertter (1986): *Juncus uncialis* is a yellowish-green annual rush about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (0.8-3.2 cm) tall, that turns slightly reddish to straw-like in color when dry. The leaves are $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 in. (2.2 cm) long and are $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ the height of the entire plant. The stems are less than 1 in. (0.3-2.8 cm) long and only 0.2-0.4 mm thick. There is a broad solitary bract that is less than $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (0.5 mm) long, and broadly squared off at the base. The bract completely enwraps the stem, and nearly surrounds the base of the single flower. The 6 tepals are usually at least $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (3 mm) long and 0.6-0.9 mm wide. The tepals are generally acute and erect to recurved, but sometimes incurved slightly, with a green or reddish central band. The margins of the tepals lack pigment and are 0.15-0.3 mm wide. There are 2 to 3 stamens that are $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (1-2.5 mm) long. The white stigma is shorter than the leaves when in flower. The ovoid to cylindrical capsule is about $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (1.8-3.2 mm) long, and $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (1-2.5 mm) wide, and is equal to or shorter than the tepals. The capsule can remain greenish, but generally turns reddish to deep maroon. The ovoid seeds are $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (0.3-0.4 mm) long, and taper to a small, slender point.

Identification Tips: *Juncus uncialis* is one of a small number of annual rushes in the Pacific Northwest. It is distinguishable by its small size and single truncate bract, but a technical key is necessary for accurate identification. Within its range in Washington, *J. uncialis* closely resembles *J. bufonius* and *J. kelloggii*, which tends to grow in the same habitat as *J. uncialis*. *J. uncialis* has a single flower per plant, leaf blades that are $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (2.2 cm) long, single bracts, a perianth that is usually at least $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (3 mm) long, and 2 to 3 stamens. *J. bufonius* has multiple flowers, leaf blades that are 2 to 4 in. (5-10 cm) long, and 6 stamens. *J. kelloggii* has 1 to 3 flowers per plant, leaf blades that are $\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{2}{3}$ in. (0.4-4 cm) long, a perianth that is less than $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (0.4 mm) long, and 3 stamens.

Phenology: This species flowers and fruits in June.

Range: This species is found in Washington, Oregon, Nevada, and California. In Washington it has been documented in Adams, Lincoln, Grant, Douglas, and Spokane counties.

Juncus uncialis
inch-high rush

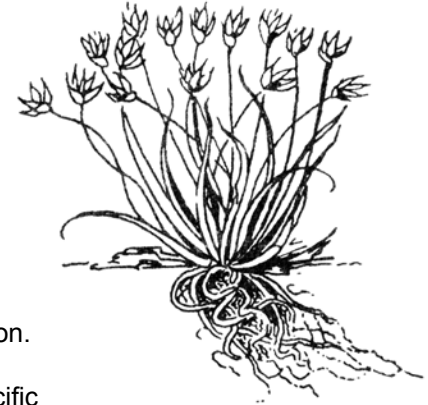
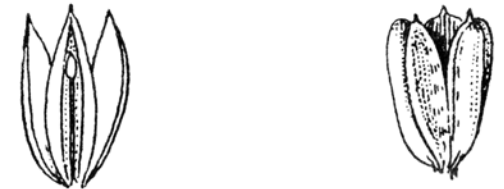
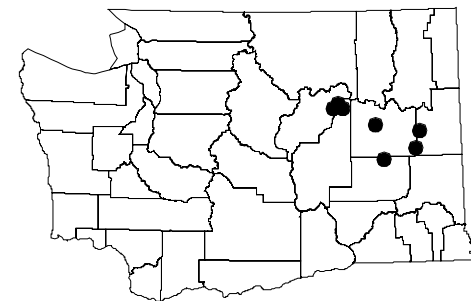


Illustration by W.S. Atkinson.
from Abrams, L. 1940.
Illustrated Flora of the Pacific
States, Vol. 1.



Known distribution
of *Juncus uncialis*
in Washington



- Current (1980+)
- Historic (older than 1980)

Juncus uncialis
inch-high rush



Juncus uncialis
inch-high rush

Habitat: This species has been found in Washington at elevations of 2100 to 2290 feet (640-697 m). It has been found in swales, moist places and vernal pools. Many sites occur in channeled scablands and mound and swale topography. Associated species include Geyer onion (*Allium geyeri*), Douglas onion (*Allium douglasii* var. *constrictum*), meadow popcorn-flower (*Plagiobothrys scouleri*), and dense-flower knotweed (*Polygonum watsonii*).

Ecology: In Washington, this species is found in vernal pools, which support a large number of annual species.

State Status Comments: In Washington this species is known from less than 10 populations, consisting of 10 to 500 individuals.

Inventory Needs: Additional inventory within vernal pools is needed in Washington.

Threats and Management Concerns: Habitat destruction of vernal pools through overgrazing or conversion to other uses is a primary concern for this species.

References:

- Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1969. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 1: Vascular Cryptogams, Gymnosperms, and Monocotyledons*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 914 pp.
- Ertter, Barbara. 1986. The *Juncus triformis* complex. *Memoirs of the New York Botanical Garden*, Vol. 39.