

Lesquerella tuplashensis Rollins, Beck & Caplow

Whitebluffs bladderpod
Cruciferae (Mustard Family)

Status: State Threatened, USFWS Candidate

Rank: G2QS2

General Description: A perennial, grayish-pubescent herb with an undivided caudex, a well-developed taproot, and a dense, many-leaved rosette of gradually reduced leaves. The dense inflorescences of yellow flowers are born on numerous decumbent-ascending stems with broad cauline leaves at anthesis

Identification Tips: *L. tuplashensis* differs from *L. douglasii* in a number of characteristics, including the presence of dense rosettes of basal leaves that are extremely broad and are often spatulate. The short flowering stems are usually densely covered with relatively broad cauline leaves. It also blooms during the later summer months, well after *L. douglasii* has set fruit and become dormant.

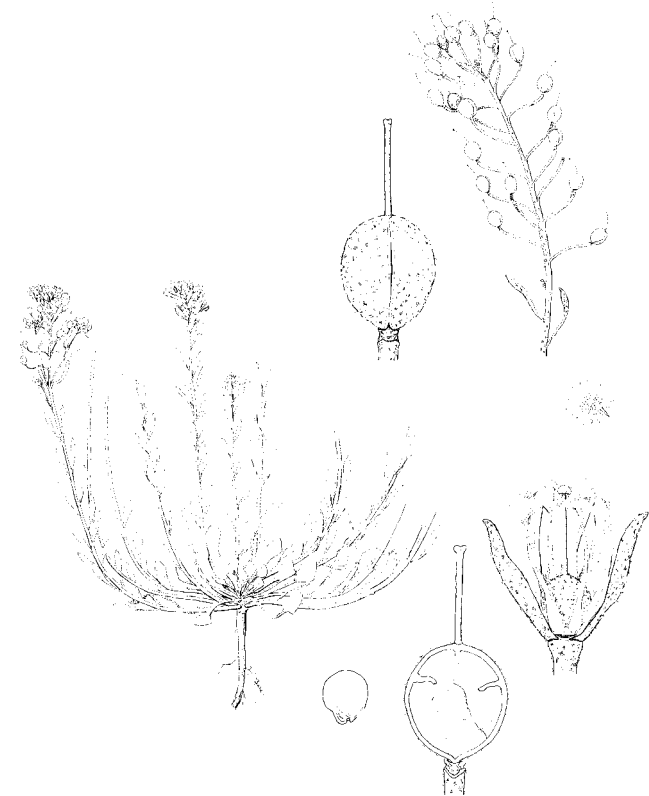
Phenology: Flowers late June through July.

Range: This narrow endemic species is restricted to a very small area in Franklin County adjacent to the Columbia River in southcentral WA. It is currently known from an area of a few meters wide by approximately 17 km (10 miles) long. It occurs in the Columbia Basin physiographic province.

Habitat: The species is restricted to a very small area along the Columbia River in the big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass association of Daubenmire (1970). The species is restricted to dry, barren, nearly vertical exposures of calcium carbonate paleosol (a "caliche" soil). The substrate is extremely alkaline and highly calcareous. Elevation ranges between 780 and 890 feet. Associated species include big sagebrush, buckwheat milkvetch (*Astragalus caricinus*), slender buckwheat (*Eriogonum microthecum*), Snake River cryptantha (*Cryptantha spiculifera*), and Sandberg's bluegrass (*Poa sandbergii*).

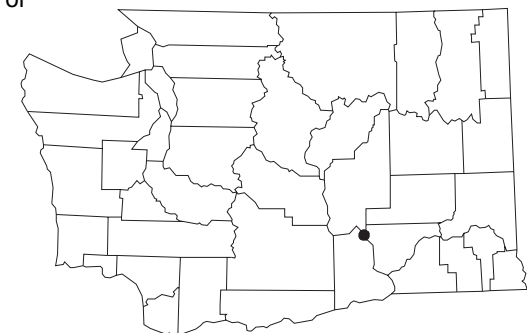
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Known distribution of
Lesquerella
tuplashensis
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Katy Beck



Katy Beck

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Ecology: The range of this species is within the driest region in the state of WA; the general area receives an average of about 6 inches of precipitation/year. As a result, the overall cover of vegetation is extremely low. As noted above, the species is restricted to a highly alkaline substrate that most plants find inhospitable. The species is presumably reliant on periodic exposure of these substrates.

State Status Comments: This recently described species is known from only one population. It is within an area with increased slope failures resulting from irrigation of adjacent lands.

Inventory Needs: Other outcroppings of caliche substrate in Franklin and Grant counties, WA, should be inventoried.

Threats and Management Concerns: The population is vulnerable to both illegal ORV use of its habitat and to slope failure due to increased irrigation.

References:

Rollins, R.C., K.A. Beck, and F.E. Caplow. 1995. An Undescribed Species of *Lesquerella* (Cruciferae) from the State of Washington. *Rhodora* 97 (891): 201-207.