

Loeflingia squarrosa* Nutt. var. *squarrosa

loeflingia
Caryophyllaceae (Pink Family)

Status: State Threatened

Rank: G5T4?S1

General Description: Adapted from Hartman (1993): Plant ½ to 2¾ inches tall, much branched at the base, glandular hairy, +/- fleshy. The stem is stiff. Stipules <1/16 inch, blade generally 1/8 to ¼ inch, needle- to awl-like, generally recurved, tip with spine. Flower sepals generally 1/8 to ¼ inch, in fruit unequal and tip strongly recurved, lateral spurs often present, bristly. Fruit 1/8 inch, 3-4 times longer than wide, 3 angled.

Identification Tips: This is the only member of the *Loeflingia* genus that occurs in Washington.

Phenology: Flowers in May.

Range: The Washington population is disjunct from the nearest known sites (in California) by 800 miles. The taxon is known from northern Baja California north to Santa Cruz County, California and eastward to Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas. In Washington, it has only been found in Benton County in the Columbia Basin physiographic province.

Habitat: In Washington, populations have been found in low swales within sandy areas. The species does not seem to occur where there is a very well-developed cryptogam layer. The known locations are within general areas dominated by *Artemisia tridentata*. Associated species include *Bromus tectorum*, *Poa secunda*, *Cryptantha circumscissa*, *Mimulus suksdorfii*, *Holosteum umbellatum*, *Microsteris gracilis*, *Gnaphalium palustre*, *Epilobium minutum*, *Gilia sinuata* and *Juncus bufonius*. The elevation of the populations in Washington is between 400 and 500 feet.

Ecology: The known populations in Washington were found during an unusually wet year in an area with a great diversity of annuals. The plants were found in swales and vernal wet areas which provide moist, protected microclimates in an otherwise inhospitable area.

State Status Comments: There are only a few known popula-

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loeflingia



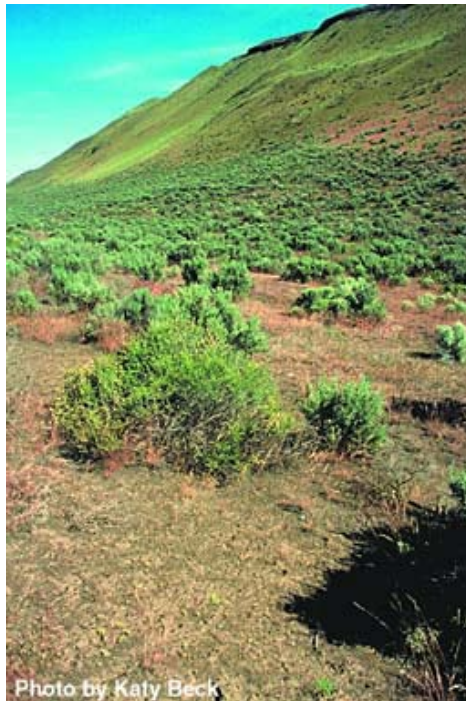
Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish. from Abrams, L. 1944. Illustrated Flora of the Pacific States, Vol. 2.

Known distribution of
Loeflingia squarrosa var.
squarrosa in Washington



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

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tions in Washington all located in a very small geographic area.

Inventory Needs: Additional inventory is needed in the Columbia Basin in appropriate habitats. As a small annual, the species may easily be overlooked.

Threats and Management Concerns: The known populations occur near roads so any roadside maintenance or herbicide spraying would be a threat. Any ground disturbing activity would threaten the species, both directly through physical damage and indirectly through increasing the likelihood of weed invasions.

References:

Hartman, R.L. 1993. *The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California*. Treatment of the Caryophyllaceae Family. University of California Press, Berkeley. p. 475-497.