

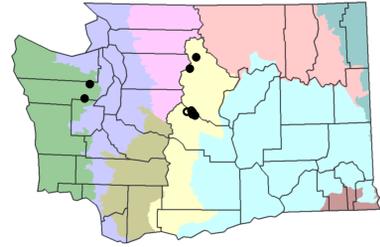
## ***Pellaea breweri*** D.C. Eaton

Brewer's cliffbrake

Pteridaceae - maidenhair fern family

status: State Sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S2



**General Description:** Fern from a short, much-branched stem forming a many-headed persistent base, covered with uniformly reddish brown needle-shaped scales. Leaves of one type, 2.5-20 cm long. Petioles 1.5-9 cm long, shining, brittle, brown, marked with a series of crosswise grooves near the base, eventually breaking off at one of the grooves; the basal part of the petiole is persistent for a number of years so that the old petiole bases are much more numerous than the green leaves. Petiole of mature leaves brown below, green above. Leaf blades linear-oblong, pinnate-pinnatifid below, 2.5-12 x 1-4 cm, with 5-11 opposite or offset pairs of pinnae attached directly to and decurrent on the petiole. Lower pinnae are deeply 2-lobed (mitten-shaped). Ultimate segments lanceolate-triangular, 5-25 mm, herbaceous, hairless.

**Reproductive Characteristics:** Margins of fertile segments curved under, covering spores; less than 1/2 of the lower surface is covered. Identifiable throughout the year.

**Identification Tips:** *Pellaea glabella* also occasionally has crosswise grooves (articulation lines) at the petiole bases. However, the petiole bases of *P. breweri* are persistent and more numerous than the green leaves, while the petiole bases of *P. glabella* are relatively few and not more numerous than the green leaves. The lower pinnae of *P. glabella* are deeply divided into 3-7 lobes (occasionally simple), and the leaf axis is brown throughout.

**Range:** WA to southern CA, east to southwest MT, south to CO, NV, and UT.

**Habitat/Ecology:** Open, rocky alpine areas; crevices, ledges, and bases of cliffs and rock outcrops; rocky slides. Grows on basalt, granite, and sandstone; often at south-facing aspects. Associated species include Brandegee's desert-parsley (*Lomatium brandegei*), Columbian lewisia (*Lewisia columbiana*), alumroot (*Heuchera* spp.), polypody (*Polypodium* spp.), spreading phlox (*Phlox diffusa*), cliff beardtongue (*Pensstemon rupicola*), saxifrage (*Saxifraga bronchialis*), and Leiberg's fleabane (*Erigeron leibergii*). Elevations in WA: 1430-2040 m (4700-6700 ft).

**Comments:** In WA much potential habitat is inaccessible and has not been surveyed. This taxon is also rare in WY and CO.

**References:** Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 2; Tryon 1957.

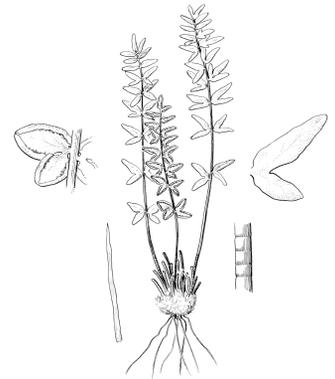


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