

***Petrophytum caespitosum* (Nutt.) Rydb. ssp. caespitosum**

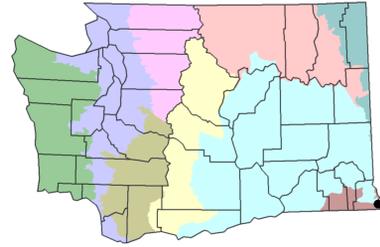
synonym: *Petrophyton caespitosum* (Nutt.) Rydb.

Rocky Mountain rockmat

Rosaceae - rose family

status: State Threatened, BLM sensitive

rank: G5T3T5 / S1



General Description: Strongly tufted perennial subshrub, forming mats up to 1 m broad. Leaves spatula-shaped to oblanceolate, (5) 7-12 (14) x (1) 1.5-4 mm, 1-nerved on the lower surface, grayish green on both surfaces, and with long, silky, slender, usually appressed hairs.

Floral Characteristics: Flowering stalks (1) 2-8 cm tall with several reduced bractlike leaves. Racemes crowded, sometimes compound at the base, (1) 2-5 cm long. Pedicels short. Calyx with long, silky, slender, usually appressed hairs and/or small, coarse, stiff hairs. Hypanthium cup-shaped, about 1 mm long, lined internally with a disc with a prominent, entire margin projecting above the point of insertion of the petals and stamens. Calyx lobes 5, lanceolate-triangular, erect. Petals 5, white, spatulate-oblanceolate. Stamens 20; filaments slender, hairless, about twice as long as the petals. Pistils 5 (3-6); styles slender, nearly 3 mm long, slightly hairy.



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Fruits: Dry follicles, about 2 mm long, hairless to sparsely covered with long, soft, shaggy hairs. Identifiable late June to August.

Identification Tips: There are three *Petrophytum* species in the Pacific Northwest. *P. cinerascens** (also rare) and *P. hendersonii* have hairless to hairy leaves with 3 nerves and styles only 1-2 mm long.

Range: Northeastern OR to CA, east to SD, and south to AZ, NM, and TX. One isolated occurrence is known from WA.

Habitat/Ecology: In rock crevices, on cliffs and ledges, from from foothills to alpine summits. Almost entirely on shelving rocks (limestone or granite). Plants in WA are on relatively dry limestone cliffs and ledges at about 670 m (2200 ft) elevation. Associated species include Leiberg's bluegrass (*Poa leibergii*), shootingstar (*Dodecatheon* spp.), bolandra (*Bolandra oregana*), wedgeleaf draba (*Draba cuneifolia*), dwarf greasebush (*Glossopetalon pungens*), American red raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*), and slender lipfern (*Cheilanthes feei*).

Comments: One occurrence is known in WA from limestone areas in Asotin Co. This taxon is not expected in other regions of WA because most of the other limestone in the state occurs in different climates. Threats include disturbance from mining, rock climbers, and weed invasion from adjacent heavily grazed area.



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