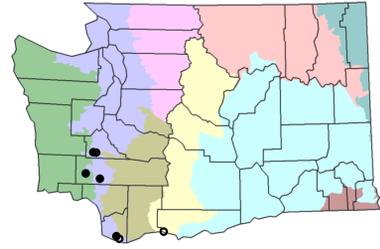


***Wyethia angustifolia* (DC.) Nutt.**

California compassplant
Asteraceae - aster family
status: State Sensitive
rank: G4 / SU



General Description: Adapted from Flora of North America (1993+): Taprooted perennial plants 15-60 cm tall. Basal leaf blades dark green, nearly triangular to broadly lanceolate, 15-35 cm long, margins entire or irregularly serrate, upper sides with stiff hairs. Stem leaves alternate.

Floral Characteristics: Heads large, radiate, usually solitary (sometimes 2-3). Involucres hemispheric, (1.5) 2-3 cm diameter. Involucral bracts conspicuously ciliate, outer faces hairy. Ray flowers yellow, (8) 12-14; petal 15-25 mm. Disc flowers many, corollas yellow, 5-lobed. Flowers May to July.

Fruits: Achenes 7-8 mm, bearing small stiff hairs.

Identification Tips: The genus *Balsamorhiza* is similar, but has mostly basal leaves; flowering stems are leafless or have a few opposite, strongly reduced leaves. In contrast, the stem leaves of *Wyethia* are alternate and generally larger. *Wyethia amplexicaulis* grows on the east side of the Cascades in WA, has hairless or gland-dotted leaf blades, involucral bracts lacking marginal cilia, and hairless achenes.

Range: WA, OR, CA, west of the Cascades and historically in the Columbia River Gorge.

Habitat/Ecology: Dry or seasonally wet open ground, grassy slopes, meadows, prairies, and openings in oak and pine-oak forests; found at elevations up to 2100 m (6900 ft) throughout its range. Populations in WA grow in moist or dry native prairie habitats and roadside prairie remnants, at about 65 m (200 ft) elevation. Associated species include tall oatgrass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), Roemer's fescue (*Festuca roemerii*), upland larkspur (*Delphinium nuttallii*), tansy ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), and camas (*Camassia quamash*).

Comments: Threats include mowing and competition from invasive weeds (particularly tall oatgrass).

References: Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 21.



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
©1959 University of Washington
Press



photo by Joe Arnett



photo by Joe Arnett