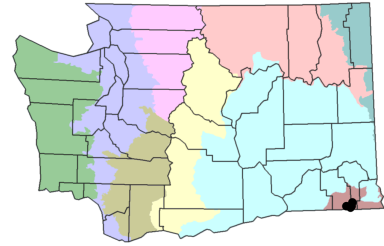


Allium dictuon H. St. John

Blue Mountain onion

Liliaceae - lily family

status: State Threatened, Federal Species of Concern,
USFS sensitive
rank: G2 / S2



General Description: Bulb-bearing perennial up to 4 dm tall. Bulbs ovoid, solitary, forming rhizomes; 1-3 new bulbs develop at ends of rhizomes, outside parent bulb coat. Parent bulb disappearing when flowering, except for roots and shrivelled bulb coats. Outer bulb coat membranous, pale brown with irregular, oblong to rhomboidal, sinuous cellular patterning (use 20x magnification). Leaves 2-3, linear, withering from tip when flowering, 10-28 cm x 1-2 mm.

Floral Characteristics: Flowering stalk persistent, solitary, round in cross section, 2-4 dm x 1-3 mm. Umbel persistent, many-flowered, erect; subtending bracts 2, persistent, 3-veined, lanceolate to lance-ovate, broader and shorter than the leaves, with a slender, pointed tip. Flowers 11-16 mm, bell-shaped. Tepals 6, bright pink to rose purple, lanceolate, outer ones longer and wider than the inner, becoming rigid and keeled in fruit, margins finely toothed, becoming rolled inward, tips long-pointed.

Fruits: Seeds black, shining. Generally identifiable June to July, depending on snowpack and time of snowmelt.

Identification Tips: *Allium acuminatum* differs in having bulbs that don't form rhizomes; new bulbs are formed within coats of parent bulbs.

Range: Local endemic of the Blue Mts. of southeastern WA.

Habitat/Ecology: Steep, open, rocky slopes, sparsely vegetated grass steppe, lithosols, and rock outcrops. Soils are derived from surface basalts and interflow material; surfaces are rocky and dominated by loose gravel. Occupied slopes are somewhat unstable and subject to erosion, typically with less than 5% vegetative cover. Elevations: 800-1650 m (2680-5400 ft). Associated species include Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*), stiff sagebrush (*Artemisia rigida*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), Sandberg bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), wormleaf stonecrop (*Sedum stenopetalum*), Gray's biscuitroot (*Lomatium grayi*), hotrock penstemon (*Penstemon deustus* var. *deustus*) and buckwheat (*Eriogonum* spp.).

Comments: This taxon is rare throughout its small range. The few known populations are all within the Umatilla National Forest.

References: Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 26.



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