

***Microseris borealis* (Bong.) Sch. Bip.**

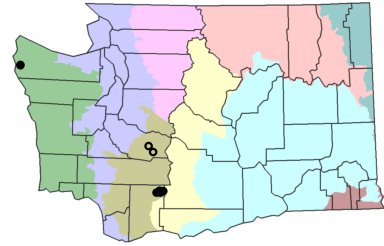
synonym: *Apargidium boreale* (Bong.) Torr. & A. Gray

northern microseris

Asteraceae - aster family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S2



General Description: Hairless taprooted perennial with milky juice, 10-70 cm tall, with a leafless or inconspicuously bracted flowering stem, often curved at the base. Leaves all basal, elongate, tapering towards the tip gradually, margins smooth or few-toothed, 5-30 cm long including the ill-defined petiole, 2-12 mm wide, faces hairless.

Floral Characteristics: Flower heads solitary, ligulate, more or less bell-shaped, borne on a leafless stalk. Involucre 10-18 mm high, sometimes lightly black-woolly. Flowers yellow to yellowish orange. Flowers July to September.

Fruits: Achenes brown, 4-8 mm long, truncate, with 10-12 ribs. Pappus of 24-48 brownish, barbed bristles, 5-10 mm long, sometimes slightly thickened at their bases.

Identification Tips: *Microseris laciniata* is similar, but has approximately 10 pappus hairs which are chaffy and flattened for 1-2 mm at the base. It also flowers earlier, from May to July. *M. borealis* can be distinguished from most *Agoseris* species by its beakless achenes.

Range: Southern AK to northwestern CA, entirely west of the Cascade crest.

Habitat/Ecology: Coastal to montane wet meadows, sphagnum bogs, and wet places. Elevations in WA: 10-1450 m (30-4760 ft). This is an obligate wetland species occurring in both perennial and seasonal wetlands. Associated species in WA include lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), mountain hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*), bog blueberry (*Vaccinium uliginosum*), alpine laurel (*Kalmia microphylla*), sweetgale (*Myrica gale*), smooth tofieldia (*Triantha occidentalis* ssp. *brevistyla*), Rainier pleated gentian (*Gentiana calycosa*), roundleaf sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*), alpine bentgrass (*Podagrostis humilis*), Sierra shooting star (*Dodecatheon jeffreyi*), sedges (*Carex* spp.), and sphagnum moss (*Sphagnum* spp.).

Comments: Grazing and trampling by elk are the main threats to this species, as well as use of off-road vehicles in and near wetlands. Periodic monitoring is necessary to document population changes due to elk disturbance. This species is also rare in CA.

References: Douglas et al. 1998-2002, vol. 1; Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 19.



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