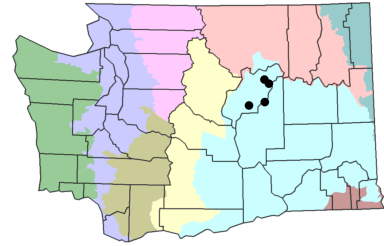


Phacelia tetramera J.T. Howell
dwarf phacelia
Hydrophyllaceae - waterleaf family
status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive
rank: G4 / S1



General Description: Adapted from Cronquist et al. (1972-94): Tiny, hairy, slender annual, freely branching from the base; lies flat on the ground, mat-forming. Leaves with petioles, usually sub-opposite, oblanceolate, margins entire or with a few coarse teeth or shallow lobes. Blades up to 1.5 cm x 7 mm. Stem leaves gradually become smaller and nearly sessile upward.

Floral Characteristics: Numerous small inflorescences are located in the forks of the branches, or at the very ends of the branches. Small, inconspicuous flowers are 4-parted or occasionally 5-parted, borne either on short stalks, or virtually stalkless. Corolla white or pale yellow, persistent, surrounding the fruit, about 1-1.5 mm long, and up to 2 mm long in fruit. Calyx nearly or fully twice as long as the corolla.

Fruits: About 20 ovules; seeds 6-10, about 0.7-1 mm long, dark brown to black; the surface pitted-netted and wrinkled in approximately parallel horizontal rings. Flowering begins in April. Plants are extremely small, not readily visible, and fully senescent by June.

Identification Tips: This taxon is unique among *Phacelia* species within its range in WA, distinguished by its annual habit, entire to shallowly-lobed leaves, (usually) 4-parted flowers, and small corollas, which are not more than 2 mm long. It can be easily distinguished from its close relative, *P. sericea*, which grows erect, reaching heights of 10-40 cm tall, and has pinnatifid leaves.

Range: WA, south to CA and east to NV, UT, and WY.

Habitat/Ecology: Alkaline soils, vernal pools, swales and wetlands, in sagebrush steppe communities from 350-700 m (1200-2200 ft) elevation. It grows in salt-encrusted soil, alkaline clay and fine silt, and cracked bare alkaline silt in vernal moist wetlands. Associated species include big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), stiff sagebrush (*Artemisia rigida*), greasewood (*Sarcobatus vermiculatus*), Sandberg's bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), soft brome (*Bromus hordeaceus* ssp. *hordeaceus*), cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), basin wild rye (*Leymus cinereus*), and clasping pepperweed (*Lepidium perfoliatum*).

Comments: This species is also rare in UT and WY.

References: Cronquist et al. 1972-94, vol. 4.

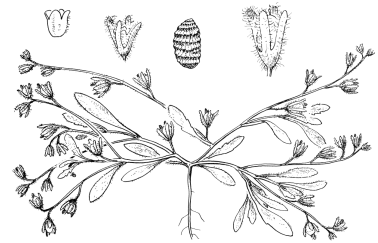


Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
©1959 University of Washington
Press



© Julie Sanderson



© Julie Sanderson