

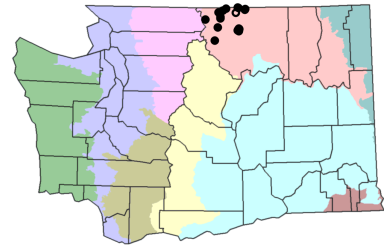
***Potentilla nivea* L.**

snow cinquefoil

Rosaceae - rose family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G5 / S2



General Description: Perennial herb with a branched crown and short rootstocks; covered with short, soft, woolly hairs and usually grayish throughout, except for the upper surface of the leaves, which are often greenish and covered with coarse, stiff hairs. Stems 3-15 (20) cm tall. Leaves alternate, divided into 3 leaflets; leaflets egg-shaped to oblong, 5-15 (35) mm long, with (5) 7-11 teeth.

Floral Characteristics: Inflorescence a compact to open cluster of 1-9 stalked flowers with bracts. Calyx silky-hairy to somewhat woolly, 8-12 mm broad, with 5 lanceolate lobes, 3-5 mm long, alternating with 5 linear-lanceolate bracts that are shorter than the calyx lobes. Petals yellow, heart-shaped, 1-2 mm longer than the calyx lobes. Stamens usually 20; pistils numerous.

Fruits: Nearly smooth achenes, 1-1.5 mm, slightly thickened and papillate near the base. Flowers and fruits July through late August.

Identification Tips: *Potentilla uniflora* also has 3 leaflets per leaf but can be distinguished by its inflorescence of 1 (rarely 2-3) stalked flowers and the absence of woolly hairs on the petioles and lower stems (but it may have long, soft, straight hairs). The phenology of *P. nivea* is slightly longer (June to August) than that of *P. uniflora* (June to July). *P. rubricaulis** is similar but has 3-5 leaflets per leaf, which are cleft halfway to the midrib.

Range: Eurasia, A K, most of Canada, WA, and disjunct in CO .

Habitat/Ecology: Alpine scree, fell fields, meadows, and dry rocky ridge tops, from 2200 to 2500 m (7200-8100 ft) in WA. This taxon prefers rocky substrates and tends to be codominant in alpine meadows. Associated species include dwarf mountain fleabane (*Erigeron compositus*), eightpetal mountain-avens (*Dryas octopetala*), varileaf cinquefoil (*Potentilla diversifolia* var. *diversifolia*), matted saxifrage (*Saxifraga bronchialis* var. *austromontana*), moss campion (*Silene acaulis*), sedges (*Carex* spp.), prairie lupine (*Lupinus lepidus*), Davidson's penstemon (*Penstemon davidsonii*) and alpine smelowskia (*Smelowskia ovalis*).

Comments: Appropriate habitats in the O kanogan National Forest should be surveyed for additional populations. Threats include sheep grazing. This taxon is also rare in B.C., Manitoba, Ontario, Q uebec, and Newfoundland.



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