

Silene seelyi C.V. Morton & J.W. Thomps.

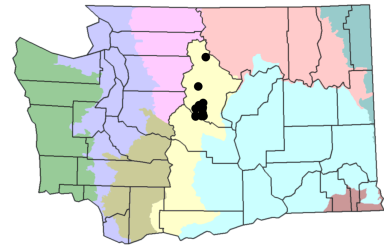
Seely's silene

Caryophyllaceae - pink family

status: State Sensitive, Federal Species of Concern, BLM

sensitive, USFS sensitive

rank: G2G3 / S2S3



General Description: Perennial with a branched caudex and short, slender rootstocks; strongly glandular with multicellular, often purplish-septate hairs. Stems very slender, decumbent or ascending, up to 3 dm long. Leaves opposite, numerous, elliptic to ovate-lanceolate with a pointed tip, 1-2 cm x 3-9 mm, thin, sessile or short-petiolate.

Floral Characteristics: Flowers 2 to several in open, leafy cymes; calyx hairy, about 7.5 mm long, tubular to bell-shaped, 10-nerved. Corolla usually less than 10 (12) mm long, purplish. Petals 5, the narrowed base (claw) of the petal about 6 mm long, lacking auricles, the blade 2-3 mm long, oblong, 2-lobed to about midlength, usually with a small lateral tooth below each lobe. There are 2 appendages at the junction of the claw and blade, each up to 0.4 mm long. Blooms late May through August.

Fruits: Capsules. Seeds numerous, brown, 0.8 mm long, very faintly reticulate.

Identification Tips: *S. menziesii* is similar, but distinguished by its leaves, which are obovate or oblanceolate, broadest above the middle, 2-6 (10) cm long, and minutely hairy but not glandular.

Range: Local endemic of the Wenatchee Mts. of WA.

Habitat/Ecology: Shaded crevices in ultramafic, granitic, or basaltic cliffs and rock outcrops, and occasionally among boulders in talus. *Silene seelyi* is restricted to sites with poor nutrient and water availability; competition with other vegetation is generally minimal. The sites are relatively stable, although slope failures and fracturing of the rocks do occur. Canopy cover is usually less than 30%; slopes are 15-20%. Associated species include alumroot (*Heuchera cylindrica*), Chelan penstemon (*Penstemon pruinosus*), field chickweed (*Cerastium arvense*), northern hollyfern (*Polystichum lonchitis*), and Wallace's selaginella (*Selaginella wallacei*). Elevations: 340-2000 m (1120-6300 ft).

Comments: The limited range and relatively narrow habitat requirements contribute to the species' current status. Threatened by road construction and recreational rock climbers.

References: Croft et al. 1997.

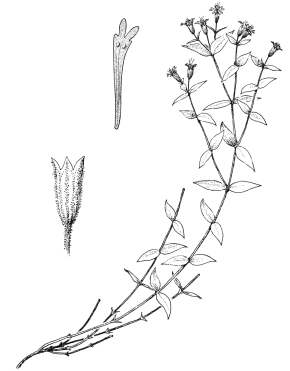


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