

***Astragalus cutleri* (Barneby) Welsh**  
**Copper Canyon Milkvetch, Cutler's Milkvetch**

**Family:** Fabaceae

**Synonyms:** *Astragalus preussii* Gray var. *cutleri* Barneby

**NESL Status:** G2

**Federal Status:** None

**Plant Description:** Moderate, caulescent, short-lived perennial, often flowering as an annual, 10 – 35 cm tall, from a superficial caudex. Stems few to several, ascending to erect, forming bushy clumps. Stipules distinct, 2 – 6.5 mm long; leaves 3 – 13cm long, leaflets 5 – 17 (19), 3 – 17 (20) mm long, (3) 5 – 12 mm broad, elliptic to lanceolate, oblanceolate, or obovate, acute to obtuse or mucronulate, strigulose to glabrous below, glabrous above. Flowers 15 – 16 mm long, white or tinged (or drying) purplish. Pods ascending to erect, stipitate, the stipe 3 – 3.5 mm long, the inflated pod oblong-ellipsoid, 14 – 18 mm long, 9 – 11 mm thick, the valves thinly cartilaginous, greenish suffused (sometimes) with purple, unilocular, glabrous. Flowering and fruiting period is from mid April to early June.

**Similar species:** Similar to *Astragalus preussii* but differing in a smaller stature, pallid, whitish flowers with a faint blue tinge, and fewer leaflets.

**Habitat:** Warm desert shrub communities, on sandy, seleniferous soils with level to moderate slopes, on the Shinarump and Chinle Formations. Known populations from ca. 3800ft elevation

**General Distribution:** San Juan County, Utah, San Juan arm of Lake Powell.

**Known Distribution on the Navajo Nation:** Copper Canyon and Nokai Canyon, San Juan County, Utah.

**Potential Navajo Nation Distribution:** Canyons adjacent to Copper and Nokai Canyons where habitat is appropriate

**Survey Period:** April through early June. This is a mostly annual plant and can therefore only be located/identified during its flowering/fruiting period.

**Avoidance:** A 200 ft buffer zone is recommended to avoid disturbance; may be more or less, depending on slope, size and nature of the project.

**References:**

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*Astragalus cutleri*

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*Astragalus cutleri* habitat

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