

Asclepias cryptoceras S. Watson

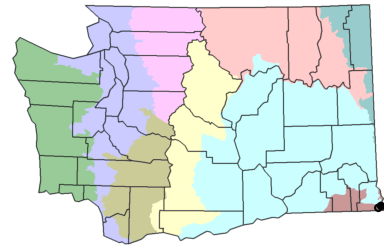
synonym: *Asclepias davisii* Woodson

Davis' milkweed

Asclepiadaceae - milkweed family

status: State Threatened, BLM strategic

rank: G4 / S1



General Description: Herbaceous, milky-sapped perennial from an enlarged, woody, often spindle-shaped root. Stems 10-30 cm, usually trailing or close to the ground without rooting adventitiously. Leaves opposite, 2-6 cm long and nearly as broad, obovate and rounded to oval, oblong or (the upper ones) ovate-lanceolate, usually apiculate, fringed with conspicuous hairs along the margin, but otherwise usually hairless.

Floral Characteristics: Inflorescence umbellate, usually terminal, the central one with 5-10 flowers; peduncle 2-4 cm, pedicels about equaling the peduncle. Lateral terminal umbels sessile and fewer-flowered. Sepals linear to lanceolate, 5-9 mm long, green to reddish, bearing dense hairs in patches. Corolla tubular, pale greenish yellow, lobes lanceolate, reflexed, 8-12 mm long, often tinged with red on back. Hoods pinkish, 5-6 mm long, sac-shaped and bilobed above, the lobes projecting into short, erect to slightly recurved teeth that slightly exceed the anthers and completely enclose the short horn. Flowers April to June.



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Fruits: Fruit a smooth, ovoid follicle, 3-5 cm long.

Identification Tips: *A. cryptoceras* is a hairless, greenish, small and trailing plant. In contrast, *A. speciosa* is grayish, woolly, tall, and grows upright. *A. fascicularis* is also taller than *A. cryptoceras*; it has longer, narrowly linear to linear-lanceolate leaves, 5-15 cm x 3-16 mm.

Range: WA, OR, CA, NV, ID, and historically in WY (possibly extirpated).

Habitat/Ecology: Dry areas of hills and lower mountains, on basalt scree or gravelly clay or silt soils. Slopes are steep, open, and 80% bare. Elevations in WA: 400-730 m (1300-2400 ft). Associated species include bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), snow buckwheat (*Erigonum niveum*), silverleaf phacelia (*Phacelia hastata*), Cusick's milk-vetch (*Astragalus cusickii*), Waha milk-vetch (*Astragalus arthuri*), and Oregon twinpod (*Physaria oregana*).

Comments: Known from 1 historical and 1 recent occurrence. Subspecies status is currently being reviewed.

References: Hickman 1993.

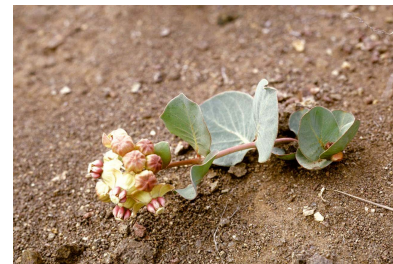


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