

***Arenaria paludicola* B.L. Rob.**

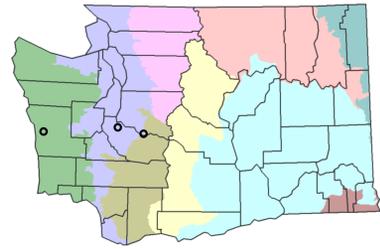
swamp sandwort

Caryophyllaceae - pink family

status: State Possibly Extirpated, Federal Listed

Endangered

rank: G1 / SX



General Description: Hairless perennial with trailing, rooting, shiny, flaccid stems, 1-2 mm thick, and up to 9 dm long. Leaves opposite, linear to linear-lanceolate, 2-5 cm x 2-5 mm, thin, rough-margined, sessile, fused basally.

Floral Characteristics: Flowers white, 5-parted, solitary in the axils of scarcely reduced leaves. Pedicels 2-5 cm long, reflexed in fruit. Sepals 3-4 mm long, green, lanceolate, pointed at the tip, veined. Petals oblong to ovate, 5-6 mm, up to twice as long as the calyx. Filaments fused at the extreme base. Styles 3. Flowers May to August.

Fruits: Capsules tightly enclosed by the calyx, spherical to ovoid, about equaling the sepals, 3-valved. Seeds 0.8 mm long, plump, blackish, smooth and shiny.

Identification Tips: *Moehringia lateriflora** and *M. macrophylla** are distinguished by their stems, which are firm, less than 1 mm thick, rough, and minutely hairy, and their seeds, which have a white, spongy appendage. *A. paludicola* is frequently confused with cleavers (*Galium aparine*), but *G. aparine* has whorls of 5-6 leaves, while the leaves of *A. paludicola* are opposite.

Range: Historically from WA and several counties in CA. There are no known extant populations in WA, and most of the CA occurrences have disappeared. Current U.S. distribution of this species is limited to San Luis Obispo Co., CA. It was also recently reported from Mexico, where its status is not well known.

Habitat/Ecology: Swamps, wetlands, and freshwater marshes, mostly along the coast. It can grow in saturated acidic bog soils and sandy substrates with high organic content. It has been found in areas with shallow standing water and without standing water. Elevations: sea level to 450 m (0-1500 ft).

Comments: There are a few unverified observations from western WA, and 1 verified historical collection from *swamps near Tacoma*. This species is also extremely rare in CA, where threats include changes in hydrology from well drilling, drought, nonnative species, urban and agricultural development, and off-road vehicle use. Plants can be propagated and transplanted by stem cuttings.

References: Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 5.



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,
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