

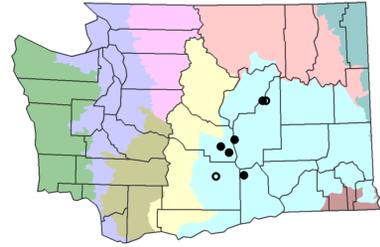
Cryptantha scoparia A. Nelson

miner's candle

Boraginaceae - borage family

status: State Sensitive, BLM sensitive

rank: G4? / S1



General Description: Slender annual 5-30 cm tall, freely branched, often without a well-defined central axis, with straight, sharp, stiff, appressed hairs, or with a few spreading hairs. Leaves linear, hairy, with towering pustules at hair bases.

Floral Characteristics: Inflorescences are naked spikes, often in pairs. Fruiting calyx narrow, 4-6 mm long, closely ascending, with short, straight, stiff, appressed hairs, and also bristly with longer, stiff, sharp, spreading hairs. Corolla about 1 mm wide.

Fruits: Usually 4 nutlets, 1.7-2.1 x 0.5-0.7 mm, lanceolate, appearing serrate along the edges, especially toward the apex, due to the presence of many fine, pointed papillae. The nutlet scar is closed or narrowly open and the style about equals the nutlets. In WA, *C. scoparia* is identifiable April to June.

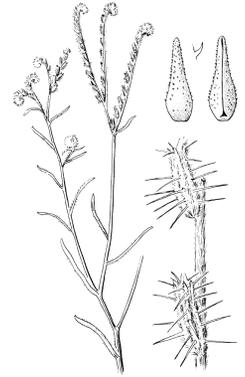


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Identification Tips: Mature nutlets are necessary for identification. The mature nutlets of *C. scoparia* are covered in numerous, small, sharply pointed papillae. This feature is visible with a 10X hand lens and unique among the annual *Cryptantha* found here.

Range: From WA south to CA, and east to MT, WY, and CO.

Habitat/Ecology: Prefers dry areas with full sun and little competing vegetation. In WA it grows on south-facing slopes and ridges between small canyons with fine, dry silt and talus, from 350 to 650 m (1200-2100 ft) elevation. Sites may be a little more alkaline than surrounding areas. Associated species include big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), snow buckwheat (*Eriogonum niveum*), winterfat (*Krascheninnikovia lanata*), common woolly sunflower (*Eriophyllum lanatum*), soft brome (*Bromus hordeaceus* ssp. *hordeaceus*), chaparral willowherb (*Epilobium minutum*), cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), and bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*). It has been found with 2 other rare WA species: Suksdorf's monkeyflower (*Mimulus suksdorfii*) and narrow-stem cryptantha (*Cryptantha gracilis*).



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Comments:

References: Cronquist et al. 1972-94, vol. 4.



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