

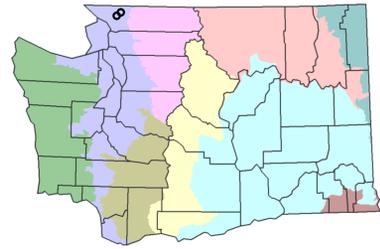
## ***Nymphaea tetragona*** Georgi

pygmy water-lily

Nymphaeaceae - water lily family

status: State Possibly Extirpated, USFS strategic

rank: G5 / SH



**General Description:** Perennial aquatic herb with leaves arising from unbranched, erect rhizomes. Leaf blades floating, elliptic-oval with bases deeply lobed, hairless, green and sometimes mottled red brown to purple above (especially on young leaves), green to dull purple beneath, 3-13 (14) x 2-11 (13) cm, with 7-13 palmate veins; petioles slender.

**Floral Characteristics:** Flowers floating, 3-7.5 cm diameter, white to pinkish with yellow centers, not fragrant. Sepals 4, uniformly green, 2-3 cm long, forming a distinct, protruding tetragon where they attach to the base of the flower. Petals 8-17. Stamens 30-70, yellowish orange and usually with some purple, filaments widest above middle. Margin of stigmatic disk with prominent, upward-curved, boat-shaped appendages, each (2) 3-4 x 2-4 mm. Blooms June to August.

**Fruits:** Berrylike, leathery, many-seeded capsules borne on curved or coiled peduncles. Capsules rupture to release a gelatinous seed mass. Seeds ovoid, about 2-3 x 1.5-2 mm, lacking papillae.

**Identification Tips:** *Nymphaea leibergii* is similar but has a circular or only slightly angled receptacle at the insertion of the sepals. In contrast, *N. tetragona* has a prominent 4-angled receptacle defined by the swollen, straight lines of insertion of the sepals; this is best viewed from the underside of the flower. *Nymphaea odorata* is recognized by its rounder, much larger leaves (up to 25 cm broad), more petals (17-43), and much larger, fragrant flowers. *Nuphar lutea* ssp. *polysepala* is easily distinguishable from *Nymphaea* by its yellow flowers, elongated leaves with pinnate venation, and usually 9 sepals.

**Range:** AK, B.C., Alberta, Sask., Manitoba, N.W.T., and temperate Eurasia. In WA this species is known from 2 historical collections and is believed extirpated.

**Habitat/Ecology:** Open water in ponds, swamps, lakes, and quiet streams in the lowland and montane zones; prefers stagnant or slow-moving water. Elevations: 0-1200 m (0-4000 ft). Threats include changes in hydrology or water quality.

**Comments:** This species is rare in B.C., Alberta, Sask., and Manitoba.

**References:** Douglas et al. 1998-2002, vol. 3; Hickman 1993; Flora of North America 1993+, vol. 3; Wiersema 1996.