

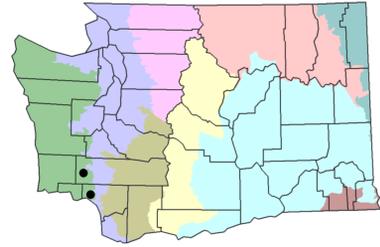
Sidalcea nelsoniana Piper

Nelson's checker-mallow

Malvaceae - mallow family

status: State Endangered, Federal Listed Threatened

rank: G2G3 / S1



General Description: Perennial herb with a stout taproot and short lateral rhizomes; stems 4-10 dm tall, hairless to hairy with short, appressed, simple hairs. Basal leaf blades shallowly 5-7 lobed; upper stem leaves much more deeply incised, usually with 7 coarsely toothed segments.

Floral Characteristics: Racemes spikelike but elongate and open, many-flowered; pedicels 3 (2-10) mm long. Calyx 4-6 mm long, usually purplish-tinged, nearly hairless to thickly covered with tiny star-shaped hairs. Petals 5-15 mm long, pinkish lavender. Flowers mid-May to September, depending on weather and site conditions.

Fruits: Carpels about 3 mm long, lightly net-veined on the sides; beak less than 0.5 mm long. Fruits mid-June to mid-October.

Identification Tips: *S. hendersonii* and *S. hirtipes* both occur within the range of *S. nelsoniana*. *S. hirtipes* is distinguished by a longer calyx (9-15 mm) with more and longer hairs, generally longer petals, and stems with more and longer hairs, some as much as 2.5 mm long. *S. hendersonii* has hollow stems that are generally hairless, with compound racemes, hairless or nearly hairless scalyces, and smooth carpels. It is coastal in distribution, generally in or near tidelands.

Range: Regional endemic of Benton Co., OR, north to Lewis Co., WA, and from central Linn Co., OR, to just west of the crest of the Coast Range.

Habitat/Ecology: Low-elevation meadows, prairie or grassland, along fencerows, streams, and roadsides, drainage swales, and edges of plowed fields adjacent to wooded areas. Standing water is present at some sites. Associated species include western buttercup (*Ranunculus occidentalis*), sedges (*Carex* spp.), tall fescue (*Schedonorus pratensis*), common velvetgrass (*Holcus lanatus*), common rush (*Juncus effusus*), and oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*). Fire suppression has led to an increase in competing woody species.

Comments: Two populations are currently extant in WA. Existing threats include mowing, plowing, stream alteration, recreation, fire suppression, and roadside herbicide application. This species is rare throughout its range.

References: Guard 1995; Halse 1986; Halse et al. 1989; Hitchcock 1957; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1998.

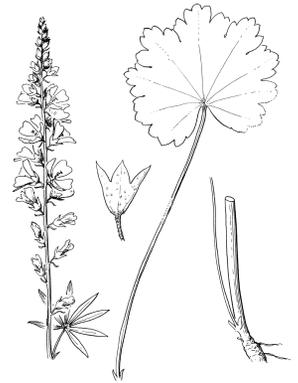


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