

Uropappus lindleyi – Lindley's False Silverpuffs

English name: Lindley's False Silverpuffs

Other English name: Lindley's Silverpuffs, Lindley's Microseris, Starpoint Microseris

Scientific name: *Uropappus lindleyi* (DC.) Nutt., *Uropappus linearifolius* Nuttall, *Microseris linearifolia* (Nutt.) Schultz-Bip

Other scientific name: *Microseris lindleyi* (DC.) Gray

Family: *Asteraceae* (Aster Family)

Risk status

BC: imperilled (S12); red-listed

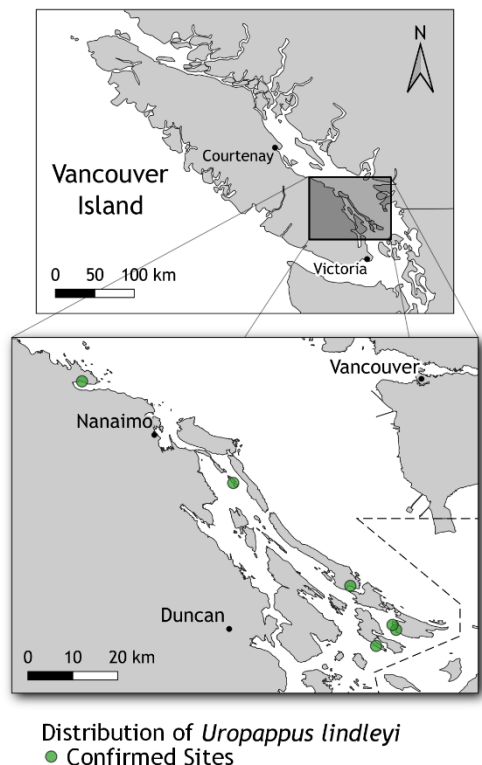
Canada: Endangered

Global: secure (G5)

Elsewhere: Washington, Oregon, California, Arizona, Idaho, New Mexico, Texas not ranked (SNR), Nevada vulnerable (S3), Utah critically imperilled (S1)

Range/Known distribution: In Canada, Lindley's False Silverpuffs has been reported from six locations (five extant) ranging from Nanoose Hill, north of Nanaimo, to the southern Gulf Islands.

In the United States, it is known as far north as north-central Washington, about 25 km south of the Canadian border in the East Kootenay Mountains. From there it ranges south through Central Washington and western Idaho to the Sonoran desert of Arizona and much of California, into Mexico. It is absent from the San Juan Islands and the Puget Trough from Eugene northwards, and it is not found on the coast of Washington or northern and Central Oregon.



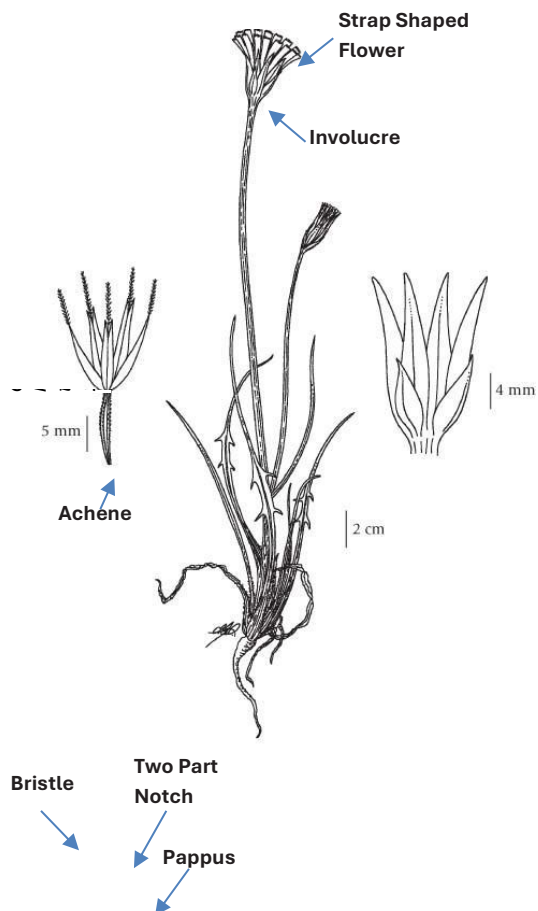
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Field description: Lindley's False Silverpuffs is a tap rooted annual up to 40 cm tall, producing either a single stem or multiple stems arising from at or near the base. Its leaves are confined to the lower part of the stem, making it look almost scapose. The leaves are alternate, 5-30 cm long, narrow, and entire or narrowly lobed. The foliage is mostly hairless although the leaves may be short-hairy, especially at the base of the petiole. The sap is milky-white. The stems end in a single head. The involucre is 15-30 mm long and is composed of slender, sharp-pointed bracts that are bent backwards when the plant is in fruit. Lindley's False Silverpuffs has at least five ligulate (ray) flowers and sometimes very many more. The ligulate flowers are light yellow. Despite being shorter than the involucre bracts the flowers are quite evident, at the peak of flowering, when the involucre spreads open. There are no disc flowers. The slender achenes are 7-15 mm long and taper above mid-length. The pappus is very distinctive. It is composed of five narrow, translucent, papery scales which are deeply cleft. A long awn arises from the base of the cleft. The inflorescence, when in fruit, takes the form of a fluffy, silvery ball.

Identification tips: Lindley's False Silverpuffs is quite distinctive, particularly in fruit. When still in flower, it may be confused with Annual Hawksbeard (*Crepis tectorum*). Annual Hawksbeard has numerous heads on each stalk, its cauline leaves are not confined to the bottom of the stem, and the involucre of the small flowers are only 6-9 mm long. When Lindley's False Silverpuffs is in fruit its bifid pappus scales, with an awn arising from the sinus, distinguish it from all other yellow-flowered members of the Aster family.



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Life history: Lindley's False Silverpuffs is an annual that relies exclusively on seeds for reproduction. In Canada, Lindley's False Silverpuffs flowers from mid-April to mid-May. Flowering is asynchronous, fruit may ripen on some heads even as other heads on the plant are in flower. The flowers are capable of self-pollination. Seeds ripen from mid-May to June. The pappus attached to the seed increases dispersal by wind and gravity and may also attach to fur, feathers, and clothing.

Habitat: In Canada, Lindley's False Silverpuffs occur on dry, steep rocky slopes including areas of talus or eroding sandstone. It may grow in the open, in woodlands of Garry Oak and/or Arbutus, or even in open Douglas-fir woods. Most sites lack a substantial cover of native shrubs, although Ocean-spray (*Holodiscus discolor*) may be present. The herb layer may have native bunchgrasses such as Lemmon's Needle Grass (*Achnatherum lemmonii*) and Blue Wildrye (*Elymus glaucus*) but the native component of the flora is usually dominated by low to medium height forbs such as Field Chickweed (*Cerastium arvense*), Spring Gold (*Lomatium utriculatum*), Woolly Sunflower (*Eriophyllum lanatum*), and broad-leaved Stonecrop (*Sedum spathulifolium*) as well as a mix of small annuals such as Small-flowered Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Acmispon parviflorus*), Slender Tarweed (*Madia gracilis*), American Wild Carrot (*Daucus pusillus*), and Tomcat Clover (*Trifolium willdenovii*). Native mosses and lichens are rarely abundant, but Wallace's Selaginella (*Selaginella wallacei*) may be common.

Why this species is at risk: Invasive plants pose a serious and pervasive threat. The greatest threats come from Scotch Broom* (*Cytisus scoparius*), annual grasses such as Barren Brome* (*Bromus sterilis*), Soft Brome* (*B. hordeaceus*), Ripgut Brome* (*B. diandrus* ssp. *rigidus*), Hedgehog Dogtail* (*Cynosurus echinatus*) and annual forbs such as Cleavers* (*Galium aparine*), Wall Lettuce* (*Mycelis muralis*), Bur Chervil* (*Anthriscus caucalis*), Common Forget-me-not* (*Myosotis discolor*), and Dove-foot Geranium* (*Geranium molle*). In these drought-prone sites, competition for space and early-season moisture from non-native annuals may be particularly stressful.

Habitat conversion may be a medium- to long-term problem as some populations occur on private land with ocean views, although the steepness of the sites and their slope instability may prevent development.

What you can do to help this species: Invasive shrubs (primarily Scotch Broom) should be controlled. Invasive herbaceous plants (particularly annual grasses and forbs) are time-consuming and expensive to control, and the benefits tend to be short-lived, so it is unlikely that they can be managed effectively.

Sites should be monitored regularly, as many are small and thus prone to extirpation.

References

B.C. Conservation Data Centre. 2024. BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer. B.C. Minist. of Environ. Victoria, B.C.
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COSEWIC. 2008. COSEWIC assessment and status report on the Lindley's false silverpuffs *Uropappus lindleyi* in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. vii + 22 pp.
(www.sararegistry.gc.ca/status/status_e.cfm)

Parks Canada Agency. 2013. Recovery Strategy for the Lindley's False Silverpuffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*) in Canada. Species at Risk Act Recovery Strategy Series. Parks Canada Agency, Ottawa. vi + 29 pp.

For further information, contact the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team, or see the web site at:
www.goert.ca

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*Refers to non-native species