**Idaho Rare Plant List – Overview of the List, Methods, and Ranking Process**

**For the 2022 Idaho Rare Plant Conference**

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**Who?** The Idaho Rare Plant List is produced and maintained by the Idaho Native Plant Society, along with agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, academics from many of Idaho’s colleges and universities, consultants, and other plant enthusiasts.

**What?** Rare plants on the list are considered those vulnerable in Idaho. These are defined as NatureServe ranks S1, S2, S3, SH, SX (see definitions below). Plants on the list are designated Rare once they are ranked or Review if they are not yet ranked or if overwhelming questions remain.

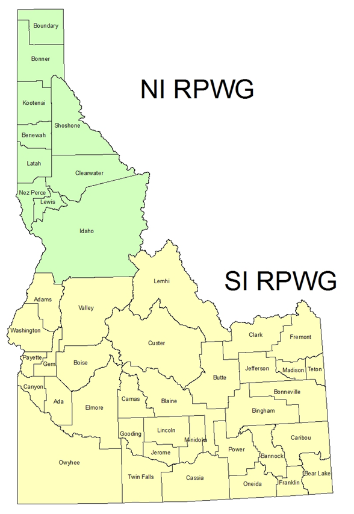
**Why?** The list identifies plants of concern. It is used to inform agencies’ management, such as BLM designation as Special Status or Forest Service’s Sensitive or Species of Conservation Concern status. The list also determines which plants are to be tracked by the Idaho Natural Heritage Program.

**Why RPC?** The Rare Plant Conference is how we update the Rare Plant List, using information exchanged in group consensus process.

**Where?** The Idaho Rare Plant List is available on the INPS web site (idahonativeplants.org). Follow the links: Rare Plant Conference – Rare Plant List – then look for the latest list (currently INPS\_RARE\_PLANT\_LIST\_2020\_05\_12). Older versions of the list are also on the website.

**When?** Rare Plant Conferences are generally held every other year. Rare Plant Working Groups (RPWGs) meet several times between RPCs.

**How?** There are two Rare Plant Working Groups; this is where the magic happens! The Northern Idaho RPWG covers Idaho County and north; Derek Antonelli is the coordinator. The Southern Idaho RPWG cover everything south of Idaho County; Beth Corbin is the coordinator. Additional regional groups may eventually be created.



**List Update Process;**

* A RPWG member “adopts” and researches a plant (writes species account)
* They do a preliminary NatureServe Rank Calculator run
* They post information to the INPS.RPWG dropbox of shared files
* The plant is discussed at one or more RPWG meeting(s) and the Rank Calculator is updated incorporating RPWG inputs
* The RPWG decides on a recommendation for the S rank for each plant
* At the RPC, the member presents the RPWG recommendation and a brief summary of the relevant information
* RPC participants discuss as needed and make a final determination on the ranking
* After the RPC, an updated Rare Plant List is posted

For more details, see the “Steps for ranking a rare plant, Kinter 2017-09-26” document.

**NatureServe Conservation Status Ranks:**

See Natureserve.org for detailed information.

G = Global rank

S = State (or Subnational) rank

T = Trinomial rank for variety or subspecies

**1 = Critically imperiled**: at very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity, very steep declines, or other factors

**2 = Imperiled**: at high risk of extinction or elimination due to very restricted range, very few populations, steep declines, or other factors

**3 = Vulnerable**: at moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a restricted range, relatively few populations, recent and widespread declines, or other factors

**4 = Apparently secure**: uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors

**5 = Demonstrably secure**: common; widespread and abundant

**X = Presumed extinct**: not located despite intensive searches and virtually no likelihood of rediscovery

**H = Historical records only**: possibly extinct, but some hope of rediscovery; not documented in 20-40 years despite some searching

**SNR** = **State Not Ranked**

Examples:

*Pyrrocoma hirta* var. *sonchifolia* **G4G5 T3 S2**

*Pyrrocoma hirta* is apparently to demonstrably secure globally

*Pyrrocoma hirta* var. *sonchifolia* is vulnerable globally

*Pyrrocoma hirta* var. *sonchifolia* is imperiled in Idaho

On our list, “+” indicates endemics: *Penstemon laxus* **G2+ S2** (the G and S rank would always be the same)

**Criteria for Prioritizing Plants to Rank**:

* Plants with new information on distribution, taxonomy, or threats
* Idaho endemics that are SNR (see “Idaho Endemics not on INPS List” tab on the Rare Plant List)
* All SNR on list
* All Idaho endemics
* All others on list that have not yet been ranked

**Rank Calculator Primary Factors**:

* Range Extent (km2 or mi2 of all occurrences or groups of occurrences separated by lack of potential habitat)
* Area of Occupancy (number of 4-km2 grid cells)
* Number of Occurrences
* Population Size
* Number of Occurrences or area of occupancy with good viability
* Threats (scope, severity): low to very high

**Rank Calculator Secondary Factors:**

* Environmental Specificity (only used if number of occurrences and area of occupancy unknown)
* Intrinsic Vulnerability (only used if overall threat unknown)
* Trend (used if available, but generally not known)

**RPWG Resources:**

In the INPS.RPWG dropbox are numerous reference documents to help with the researching, documenting, and ranking process. These include format documents for Species Accounts, Powerpoints, etc., as well as Forest Service and BLM current status lists, general ownership files and a 4-km2 grid layer for geographic information systems, and the latest version of the NatureServe Rank Calculator.

Researching plant specimen records has become increasingly less difficult with the development of several on-line herbaria consortia. Primary among these are:

* The Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbaria <www.pnwherbaria.org>
* SEINet or the Consortium of Intermountain Herbaria (generally the same results) <https://swbiodiversity.org/> or <https://intermountainbiota.org/>
* Consortium of California Herbaria /[www.cch2.org](http://www.cch2.org)/
* New York Botanical Garden C.V. Starr Virtual Herbarium <http://sweetgum.nybg.org/science/vh/>

However, that doesn’t mean that all specimens have been correctly identified!

**Idaho Rare Plant List – Current Statistics**

There are currently 495 plants on the list. Of these, 270 plants have been ranked at previous RPCs (from 2009 to 2020) = 55%.

7 plants currently unranked on the list are to be ranked at this RPC.

20 plants are to be presented as new additions at this RPC.

3 plants will be recommended for removal from the list (one previously ranked. We may not get to these removals at this conference, but assuming we do) -> 296 ranked out of a total 512 plants or 58% of the final list ranked upon completion of this RPC.