

***Astragalus humillimus* Gray ex. Brand.
Mancos Milkvetch**

Family: Fabaceae **Synonyms:** *Tragacantha humillima* (Gray) O.Kze, *Phaca humillima* (Gray) Rydb.

NESL Status: G2 **Federal Status:** Listed Endangered (50 FR 26568 26572)

Plant Description: Small, clump or mat forming perennial plants with **persistent spiny leaf stalks**. Stems up to 1 cm long. Leaves up to 4 cm long, with 7–11 oval leaflets, 0.7–2.0 mm long. Flowers lavender to purplish with a conspicuous lighter colored spot in the throat of the corolla tube. Banner 7–10mm long, keel and banner petal 6–8 mm in length. Fruits ellipsoid, ca. 4.5 mm long and 2 mm wide. Flowers from mid April to early May.

Similar species: *Astragalus micromerius* Barneby does not have persistent spiny leaf stalks.

Habitat: Forms highly localized populations from 4–20 acres in size. It is typically found on large, nearly flat sheets of exfoliating whitish-tan colored sandstone, in small depressions and sand filled cracks on or near ledges and mesa tops in slickrock communities of Point Lookout & Cliffhouse Sandstone.

General Distribution: Known only from the Four Corners area of New Mexico, San Juan County, and adjacent Montezuma County, Colorado.

Navajo Nation Distribution: San Juan County, NM, Palmer Mesa east to the Hogback area and south of the San Juan River, to a hogback east of Little Water.

Potential Navajo Nation Distribution: Four Corners area, all slickrock formations of Point Lookout & Cliffhouse Sandstone, and possibly other related members.

Survey Period: Best during the flowering period from mid April to early May, but can be identified most of the year by an experienced individual. Suitable habitat can be identified year round.

Avoidance: A 200 ft buffer zone is recommended to avoid disturbance; may be more or less depending on size and nature of the project.

References:

- Knight, P., and D. House. 1989. Mancos Milkvetch (*Astragalus humillimus*) Recovery Plan. Prepared for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Region 2, Albuquerque, NM.
- New Mexico Rare Plant Technical Council. 1999. New Mexico Rare Plants. Albuquerque, NM. New Mexico Rare Plants Homepage. <http://nmrareplants.unm.edu>
- Sivinski, R. 1995 Progress Report. Mancos Milkvetch (*Astragalus humillimus*). Section 6, Segment 10. NM Forestry Division. 6 pp.
- Spackman, S. et al. 1997. Colorado Rare Plant Field Guide. Prepared for the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. <http://www.cnhp.colostate.edu/rareplants/cover.html>
- USDI Bureau of Land Management. 1995. The Farmington District Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive Plant Field Guide. Prepared by Ecosphere Environmental Services, Inc., Farmington, NM.



Astragalus humillimus

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Astragalus humillimus habitat

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