

## *Orthocarpus bracteosus*

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### **Why the species is at risk**

In British Columbia there is only one known remaining occurrence of this species. This population occurs on the boundary between the Canada Coast Guard property and the CFAF lease on Trial Island. There is an Ecological Reserve on Trial Island, but rosy owl-clover is not known from the reserve. Trial Island is frequented by kayakers and beach fires lit by kayakers can spread to surrounding uplands (as occurred on Little Trial Island in 1999). Trampling by Canada Coast Guard and CFAF staff and contractors, and kayakers, poses a real threat to this small population.

### **What you can do to help this species**

This plant is so rare, that no action or disturbance should be taken at the site without expert advice and inspection. Management practices must be tailored to the specific circumstances at the site. Potential management tools will depend on the specific circumstances and may require experimentation on artificially established populations prior to implementation. **Before taking any action, expert advice must be obtained and no action taken without it. Please refer to the introductory section of this manual.**

### **References**

- Chuang, T.I. and L.R. Heckard. 1992. A taxonomic revision of *Orthocarpus* (Scophulariaceae - Tribe Pedicularae). *Systematic Botany* 17(4): 560-582.
- Atsatt, P.R. 1970. The population biology of annual grassland hemiparasites II. Reproductive patterns in *Orthocarpus*. *Evolution* 24:598-612.

For further information, contact the Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team, or see the web site at: [www.goert.ca](http://www.goert.ca).

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# *Orthocarpus bracteosus*

**English name** rosy owl-clover

**Scientific name** *Orthocarpus bracteosus*

**Family** Scrophulariaceae (Figwort)

**Other scientific names** none

**Risk status**

BC: critically imperilled (S1); red-listed

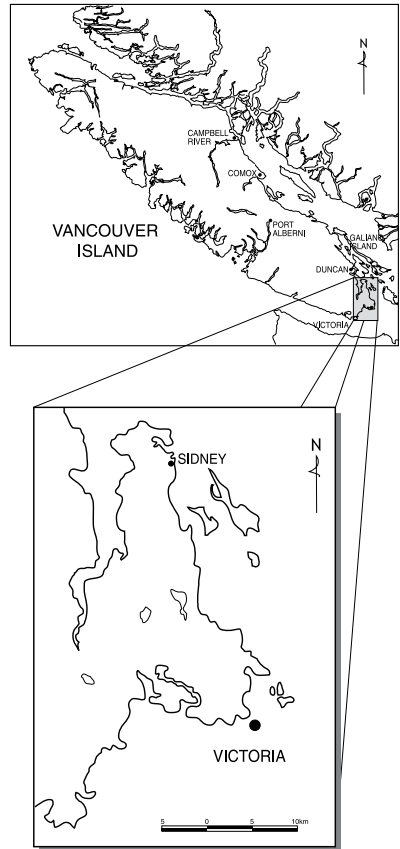
Canada: endangered (N1)

Global: vulnerable (G3)

Elsewhere: Washington – critically imperilled (S1); California, Oregon, Maryland, New York – reported (SR)

**Range/Known distribution**

Rosy owl-clover occurs in western North America, mainly from Vancouver Island south to Oregon west of the Cascades, and southward east of the Cascades to Plumas County, California. In Washington, it is known only from one site in Klickitat County, and from historical records in San Juan and Whatcom counties. In British Columbia there is a single known occurrence plus 9 unconfirmed historic localities.



**Distribution of *Orthocarpus bracteosus*.**

● recently confirmed sites

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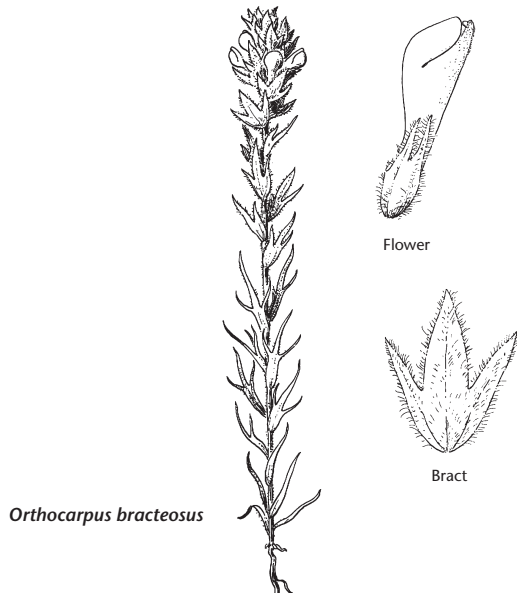
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### Field description

A rose-purple annual herb from an erect stem 10-40 cm tall, with a slender, simple or branched stem. Plant is short-hairy and usually purple-tinged. Leaves are alternate, stalkless, linear to lance-shaped and 1.5-3.5 cm long. Leaves have short spreading hairs and are sometimes glandular (sticky structures). The leaves are split into three lobes at the tip; the upper leaves in the flower head are reduced to wide 3-cleft bracts (small modified leaves). Flowers are grouped in a dense, densely hairy and glandular terminal spike 3-15 cm long with prominent bracts. The bracts are either all green or are tinged with purple in the upper part. The tube-shaped flowers are rose-purple or occasionally white to cream coloured, hairy, 12-20 mm long, and protrude from among the bracts. Tube-shaped sepals are 6-10 mm long, green and have gland-tipped hairs. The fruit is a capsule, elliptical in shape, 5-7 mm long and contains 8-15 seeds about 3 mm long.

### IDENTIFICATION TIPS

Similar small annuals are referred to as owl-clovers, even though they are distributed in three genera (*Orthocarpus*, *Castilleja* and *Triphysaria*). The small size and the short-hairy, purplish tinged leaves of rosy owl-clover are distinctive among owl-clovers, as are the protruding tube-shaped rose-purple flowers. White-flowered plants might be mistaken for a different species of owl-clover, but the white flowered forms only occur together with purple-flowered plants.



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### **Life history**

Rosy owl-clover is an annual species, completing its life cycle in one year. It flowers from June through August, and sets seed in July to August.

### **Habitat**

*Orthocarpus bracteosus* inhabits shallow soils that are moist in the late winter and spring. These sites support meadows dominated by grasses and herbaceous perennials with little or no tree or shrub overstorey. Associated native herbaceous perennials include sea thrift (*Armeria maritima*), broad-leaved shootingstar (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*), coastal strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*), gumweed (*Grindelia integrifolia*), the red-listed species, seaside birds-foot trefoil (*Lotus formosissimus*), the blue-listed species, Spanish clover (*Lotus unifoliatus*) and sea plantain (*Plantago maritima*). Elevations: to 20 m.