

***Pediocactus simpsonii* Engelm. var. *robustior* Coult.**
hedgehog cactus
Cactaceae (Cactus Family)

Pediocactus simpsonii* var. *robustior
hedgehog cactus

Status: State Review Group 1
Rank: G4T4SNR

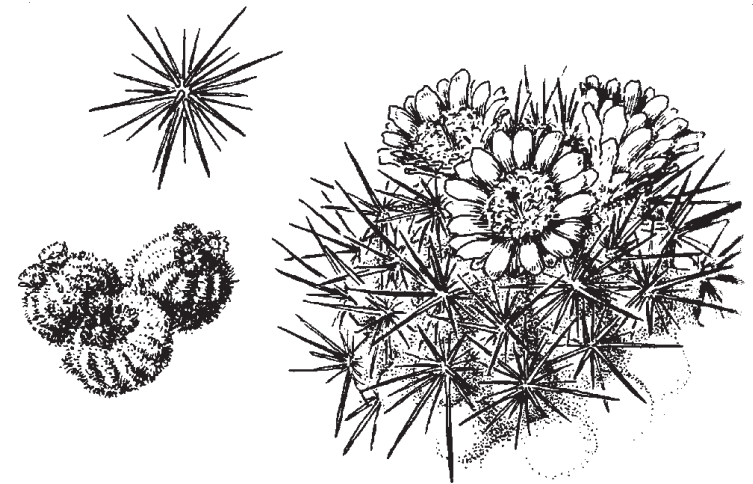
General Description: Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1961):
Pediocactus simpsonii var. *robustior* is a small single or clustered cactus with globe-like stems that may be flattened on the top. The stems are 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ to 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (7-12 cm) thick with tubercles (fleshy nodules) 1/2 to 1 in. (1.5-2.5 cm) long in 8-13 spiral rows. The 8-12 straight, central spines are yellowish to reddish-brown and 1/2 to 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (1.5-2.8 cm) long, while the 10-30 marginal spines are smaller and whitish. The yellowish-green to purple flowers are 1/2 to $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (1.5-2 cm) long, and the rounded fruits are $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ in. (6-8 mm) long. The seeds are black and about 1/8 in. (3 mm) long.

Identification Tips: This variety of *Pediocactus simpsonii* is the only pincushion cactus that is found in Washington. The only other cacti that are found in Washington are in the genus *Opuntia* (prickly-pear) and are not easily confused with *Pediocactus*. *Opuntia* have distinctly flattened stems, while species of *Pediocactus* are quite globular.

Phenology: This taxon blooms from May through July in Washington.

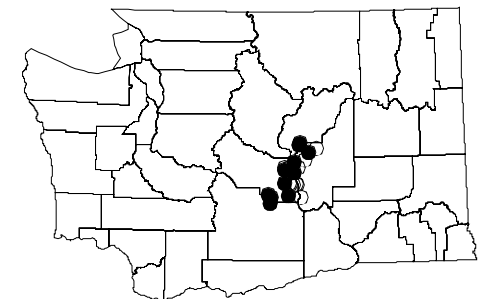
Range: *Pediocactus simpsonii* var. *robustior* ranges from eastern Washington to Nevada, and has been found in Yakima, Kittitas, Chelan, Douglas, and Grant counties in Washington.

Habitat: This taxon may be found in thin, rocky soil on ridge tops, desert valleys, and low mountains, and is found at elevations from 1000 to 4000 feet (300-1200 m) in Washington. Associated species found in Douglas County include scabland sagebrush (*Artemisia rigida*), thyme-leaf wild buckwheat (*Eriogonum thymoides*), curly blue grass (*Poa secunda*), hairy balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza hookeri*), onion (*Allium* spp.), desert-parsley (*Lomatium* spp.), desert yellow fleabane (*Erigeron linearis*), narrow-leaf mock goldenweed (*Haplopappus stenophyllus*), carpet phlox (*Phlox hoodii*), and Douglas' cluster lily (*Brodiaea douglasii*).



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Known distribution
of *Pediocactus simpsonii*
var. *robustior*
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Ecology: The dry, rocky, exposed sites in which this taxon occurs may lower the effects of competitive species.

State Status Comments: This taxon is locally abundant and known from about 20 occurrences in Washington, but has a limited overall range. Collecting pressure makes it difficult to ascertain rarity.

Inventory Needs: Adjacent habitat on private land should be investigated.

Threats and Management Concerns: The greatest threat to this taxon is collecting by cactus collectors.

References:

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson.
1961. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 3: Saxifragaceae to Ericaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 614 pp.