

ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Plant Abstract

Element Code: PDEUP0H140

Data Sensitivity: No

CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE

NAME: *Croton wigginsii*
COMMON NAME: Wiggins' Croton, Dune Croton
SYNONYMS: *Croton arenicola*
FAMILY: Euphorbiaceae

AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION: L. C. Wheeler, Contr. Gray Herb. 124: 37(-38). 1939.
Based on *Croton arenicola* Rose & Standl., Contr. U. S. Natl. Herb. 16: 12. 1912; not *Croton arenicola* Small, 1905.

TYPE LOCALITY: Mexico, Sonora, [Mpio. Puerto Penasco], Adair Bay, sandhills, 11-20-1908.

TYPE SPECIMEN: Sykes 62, holotype US #574267.

TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS: There are 9 species in this genus in Arizona.

DESCRIPTION: Shrubs or sub shrubs 1.0-2.5 m, slender and usually taller than wide, often woody at the base; erect with sharply ascending, straight branches. Densely pubescent with the silvery-gray lepidote-stellate scales. Leaves gradually drought deciduous, highly variable in size depending upon soil moisture; larger leaves lanceolate to narrowly lanceolate, 4.5-8.5 x 0.8-1.6 cm; dry-season leaves linear-lanceolate to linear, 1.5-6.5 cm x (0.5) 1.5-1.8 (3) mm; minute, deciduous cylindrical glands in the position of stipules. Dioecious. Flowers of both sexes are without petals. Stamens are 8-15 per flower. Seeds 4.5-7.8 mm, oblong, mottled.

AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION: The large range in seed size is notable. The larger seeds, probably more than twice as heavy as the smaller ones, are from large-leaved, robust plants, whereas the smaller seeds are relatively stunted, drought-stressed plants. *Croton wigginsii* is a conspicuously distinctive, allopatric segregate of *C. californicus*. Some of the characteristics that separate them are: *Croton wigginsii* is a shrub up to 1.5-2.5 m, and is woody at the base where *C. californicus* is herbaceous or suffruticose, 0.5-1.0 m tall. Also *Croton wigginsii* is densely branched, strict and several times taller than wide, where *C. californicus* is open, divaricately branched, and is wide or wider than tall.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Color photo (Taylor, in
http://elib.cs.berkeley.edu/cgi/img_query?enlarge=0000+0000+0801+0280
)
Line drawing and color photo (Falk et al. 2001)

Line drawing (California Department of Fish and Game in www.dfg.ca.gov/hcpb/cgi-bin/more_info.asp?idKey=ssc_tespp&specy=plants&query).

TOTAL RANGE: This species' range is primarily Sonora, Mexico from Guaymas north into the United States only as far as the extreme southeastern corner of California and southwestern Arizona.

RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA: Southwestern Arizona, Yuma County.

SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS

GROWTH FORM: Shrubby perennial.

PHENOLOGY: Usually March to May but can flower in any season.

BIOLOGY:

HABITAT: Low stabilized to high shifting sand dunes and along sandy arroyos in the Sonoran Desert.

ELEVATION: Sea level to 500 ft (155 m)

EXPOSURE:

SUBSTRATE: Sand dunes.

PLANT COMMUNITY:

POPULATION HISTORY AND TRENDS: According to a CDFG survey in 1998-1999, the population is declining in California.

SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS: [3C USDI, FWS 1985]
[3C USDI, FWS 1980]

STATE STATUS:

OTHER STATUS:

MANAGEMENT FACTORS: Populations in some places have been adversely affected by dune buggy traffic. Most of the populations (in California) are located in areas that remain open to OHV traffic.

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN: A portion of the Algodones Dunes has been designated as the North Algodones Dunes Wilderness under the California Desert Protection Act and is closed to OHV activity.

SUGGESTED PROJECTS: Monitoring surveys of the population to determine its range and status.

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP: DOD-USAF Barry M. Goldwater Gunnery Range; BLM-Yuma Field Office.

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

REFERENCES:

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Wheeler, L. C. 1939. Contr. Gray Herb. 124: 37(-38).

Wiggins, I. L. 1980. Flora of Baja California, Stanford University Press, Stanford California. Pp: 118.

MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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