

***PYRROCOMA GOSSYPINA* (ASTERACEAE: ASTEREAE),
SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS ENDEMIC**

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ABSTRACT

Pyrrcoma gossypina Greene is endemic to the San Bernardino Mountains, where it occurs mostly commonly in alkaline meadows. It has been taxonomically allied (with little justification) to *P. uniflora*, but the inflorescence of *P. gossypina* is characteristically racemoid and it probably is more closely related to the *P. racemosa* group, which otherwise occurs in regions relatively close to the Pacific Ocean, from Oregon to central California.

Pyrrcoma gossypina Greene was described in the protologue as "heads large, racemosely disposed, one in the axil of each cauline leaf and one terminal ... " (Fig. 1, UC isotype). Hall (1907) transferred it to *Haplopappus*, but later recognized it as a subspecies within *Haplopappus uniflorus*, noting that "the subspecies can be separated from the tomentose form of *uniflorus* only on differences in the involucre ... " and that its tendency for a racemose inflorescence suggests that it might be the primitive form of the species.

In recognizing the genus *Pyrrcoma*, Mayes (1976) followed by keeping *P. gossypina* within *P. uniflora*, distinguishing it from the typical variety by floccose-tomentose pubescence, longer inflorescence, larger involucre, unequal phyllaries, and geographical isolation.

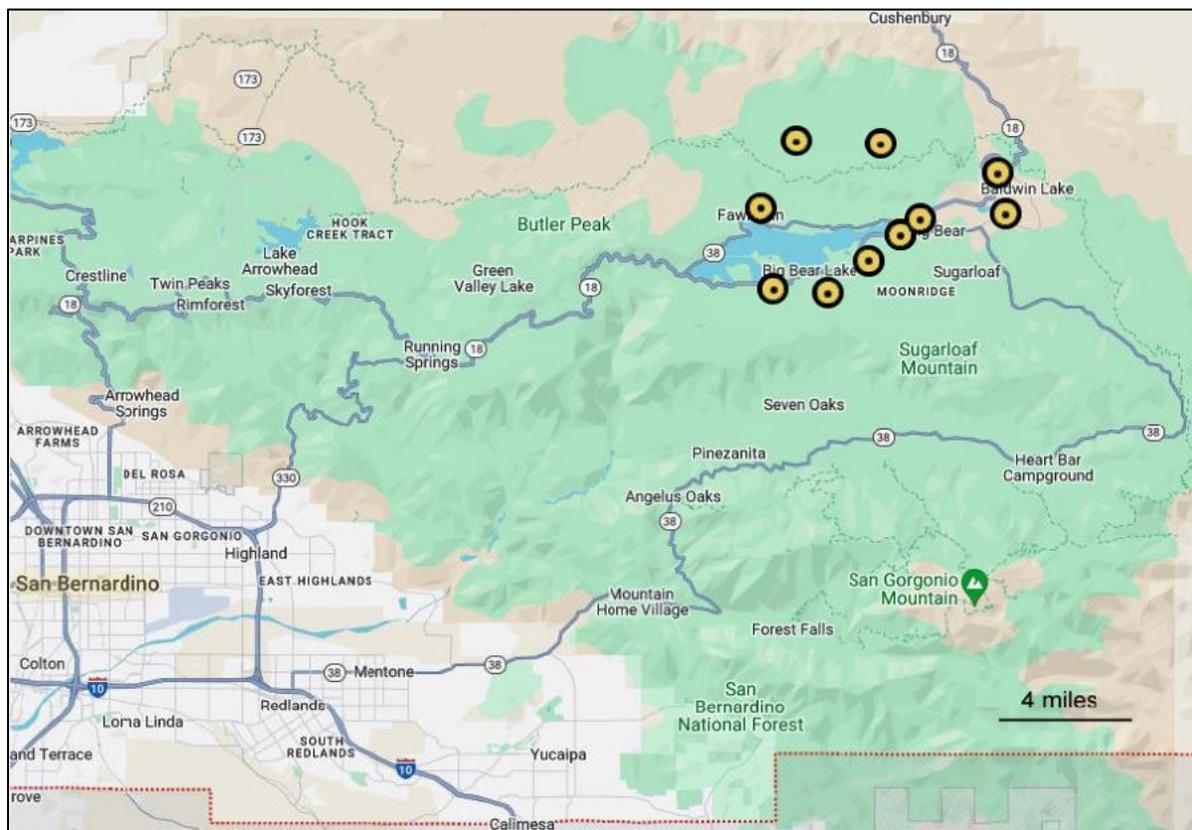
The rationale for regarding *Pyrrcoma gossypina* as conspecific with *P. inuloides* seems distantly obscure, as it is distinct in morphology and separate in geography from closest populations of the latter by more than 500 miles. It is endemic to the San Bernardino Mountains of southern California and has never been mistaken in identity, as it is the only *Pyrrcoma* species there. The near-Pacific geography and the racemose inflorescence suggest, instead, that it more likely is part of the *Pyrrcoma racemosa* (sensu stricto) group (Nesom 2025), which occurs in the Klamath Mountains and Coast Ranges. This would not be unexpected, as "Altogether, 442 taxa (34% of the total species of the flora) exhibit a southerly disjunction from a more widespread, northern Cordilleran distribution and this is, therefore, a major direction of species infusion into the San Bernardino Mountains flora" (Krantz 1994, p.112).

PYRROCOMA GOSSYPINA Greene, Pittonia 3: 23. 1898. *Haplopappus gossypinus* (Greene) Hall, Univ. Calif. Publ. Bot. 3: 49. 1907. *Haplopappus uniflorus* subsp. *gossypinus* (Greene) Hall, Publ. Carnegie Inst. Wash. 389: 150. 1928. *Haplopappus inuloides* var. *gossypianus* [sic] (Greene) Boivin, Phytologia 23: 23. 1972. *Pyrrcoma uniflora* var. *gossypina* (Greene) Kartesz & Gandhi, Phytologia 71: 61. 1991. **TYPE: California.** San Bernardino Co.: San Bernardino Mts, Bear Valley, Aug 1882, S.B. and W.F. Parish 1558 (holotype: US; isotypes: GH, UC-2 sheets).

Stems decumbent-ascending to ascending-erect, 10–30 cm, persistently tomentose, eglandular. **Leaves:** basal mostly lanceolate, 5–10 cm long, attenuate to a petiolar region 1/3–1/2 the leaf length, blades 6–18 mm wide, persistently, sparsely to densely tomentose, eglandular, margins serrate to very shallowly serrate or subentire, fibrous remnants of petiole bases persistent, cauline reduced in size above the basal, mostly linear-oblong to linear-oblong, clasping-sheathing, not basally ampliate. **Heads** 2–8 in a loosely columnar raceme or sometimes in a loose panicle with peduncles elongating up

to 9 cm long, the heads appearing solitary. **Involucre** 15–20 mm wide (pressed); phyllaries oblong with a triangular-deltate, sharply acute apex, in 3–4 series of unequal length, inner 8–10 mm long, green patch on the distal 1/3–1/2, sparsely tomentose to glabrous, eglandular, margins narrowly scarious. **Ray florets** (12–)16–20, fertile (stigma barely exerted), corollas 8–9 mm long, 1.5–2 mm wide, coiling tardily. **Disc corollas** 6–6.5 mm long. **Achenes** 2.5 mm long, strigose.

Flowering (June) July–August (September, October). Wet and dry alkaline meadows, margins of seasonally wet areas in meadows, swales in pebble plains, along annual streams, grazed pastures, vacant lots, openings in *Pinus jeffreyi*, old lake sediments, roadside ditches, sagebrush flats, dry rocky soil; 6550–7500 feet.



Map 2. Distribution of *Pyrocoma gossypina*. San Bernardino Co., California. See Calflora (<https://www.calflora.org/app/taxon?crn=6978>) for more detailed view, based on many cited collections.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LITERATURE CITED

- Nesom, G.L. 2025. Taxonomy of the *Pyrocoma racemosa* group (Asteraceae: Astereae). *Phytoneuron* 2025-08: 1–64.
- Krantz, T.P. 1994. A phytogeography of the San Bernardino Mountains, San Bernardino County, California. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of California, Berkeley.



Figure 1. *Pyrocoma gossypina*. Parish 1558, isotype (UC).

Nesom: *Pyrocoma gossypina*



Figure 2. *Pyrocoma gossypina*. Derby s.n. (UC).



Figure 3. *Pyrocoma gossypina*. Davidson 2163 (US).



Figure 4. *Pyrocoma gossypina*. Abrams 2917 (US).



Figure 5. *Pyrocoma gossypina*. Abrams 2917 (DS).



Figure 6. *Pyrocoma gossypina*. Thorne 53644 (UC).

Nesom: *Pyrocoma gossypina*Figure 7. *Pyrocoma gossypina*. Templeton 11634 (RSA).



Figure 8. *Pyrocoma gossypina*. Thorne 53357 (UC).