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NOTES ON THE LOCALITY OF *PYRROCOMA EREMICA* (ASTERACEAE: ASTEREAE)

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ABSTRACT

The type locality of *Pyrrocoma eremica* was reported in the protologue as in Edwards Creek Valley in Churchill Co., Nevada. The location is actually in Smith Creek Valley in Lander Co., Nevada. Searches in the area failed to locate an extant *Pyrrocoma eremica* population.

Pyrrocoma eremica was described from a single collection — *Hitchcock 4640* (holotype: WTU; isotype: WS) — collected in 1938 (Nesom 2025). Nesom noted the type locality as in Edwards Creek Valley in Churchill Co., Nevada. This struck me as odd because there is no habitat for *Pyrrrocoma* in that part of Edwards Creek Valley. The label information on the type reads "Nevada ..., Alkali flat; 35 miles west of Austin, Lander County." Present-day Highway 50 traverses east-west across central Nevada and goes through Austin. "35 miles west of Austin" along present Highway 50 would indeed put the location in Edwards Creek Valley in Churchill County. Current Highway 50, however, over New Pass, was not completed and paved until 1958. The earlier Highway 50 (Hitchcock's route) was south of the current route and went over Carroll Summit — it is now called Nevada Highway 722. "35 miles west of Austin" along Highway 722 is a location near Peterson Station in Smith Creek Valley in Lander County. Peterson Station once housed a gas station, the remnants of which are still there. It was a welcome stop on a major highway. Hitchcock's original label location of Lander County is correct.

Hitchcock's label information notes "alkali flat." Smith Creek Valley harbors a large alkali flat or playa. The south side of the playa approaches Highway 722 but presently there is not adequate habitat for *Pyrrocoma eremica* at the location. Hitchcock's site could have been the area north of Peterson Station along the drainage from Peterson Creek, but this area has been highly modified, Peterson Creek has been diverted, and some of the area was converted to alfalfa fields that are now fallow. Searches did not yield any plants or prospective habitat.

On the north side of the playa, about 5 air miles north of Peterson Station, there is a series of hot and cold springs. *Pyrrocoma lanceolata* is flourishing on the alkali flats around these springs. These plants are quite different from the type of *P. eremica* in having broader involucral bracts that do not taper to a sharp point and do not have sunken glands.

Lander Co., Smith Creek Valley, Hot Springs on the W side of Dry Lake, E of the Smith Creek Road, 39.313454 N, 117.54951 W, 15 Aug 2001, *Tiehm 13724* (BYU, CAS, NY, OSU, RENO, UNLV)

Lander Co., Smith Creek Valley, Hot Springs at NW end of the playa, N of Hwy 722, 39.31337 N, 117.55148 W, 17 Aug 2025, *Tiehm 20352* (RENO and 38 duplicates to distribute)

Corey Lange, Wildlife Biologist for the Pahrump Field Office, in Las Vegas, Nevada, has posted iNaturalist photos of plants apparently from the same population as *Tiehm 13724*

<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/308121418> 39.3153 N, 117.54885 W, 18 Aug 2025

More field work is warranted to see if *Pyrrocoma eremica* is extant.

LITERATURE CITED

Nesom G.L. 2025. *Pyrrocoma eremica* (Asteraceae: Astereae), a new species from Churchill Co., Nevada. Phytoneuron 2025-28: 1–6.