

ORIGINAL PURPOSE To protect a small example of the antelope brush community, the most arid shrub-steppe ecosystem in Canada

OVERVIEW

Date established:	15 March 1972	Location:	S Okanagan Valley, W of N end of Osoyoos Lake
ORC #:	3033	Latitude:	49°03'N
Map number:	82 E/4	Longitude:	119°31'W

Total Area:	4.5 ha	Elevation:	335 m
Land:	4.5 ha		

Access: Road access to northeast corner from Highway 97, north of Osoyoos. The entire reserve is fenced, and past disruption has been minimal.

Biogeoclimatic Zones: Bunchgrass (BG)
Biogeoclimatic Variant: BG xh1 Okanagan Very Dry Hot
Ecosection(s): Southern Okanagan Basin
Region: Okanagan
Management Area: South Okanagan

COMPOSITION

Physical: Rocky knolls thinly covered with sandy soil form the central axis of this reserve. These are bordered by sandy flats on their west and south sides, and a steep northeast-facing slope along the northeast boundary. A small draw containing an intermittent stream occurs in the extreme northwestern corner of the reserve. Aridity is accentuated on parts of this site which have shallow and/or sandy soils.

Biological: The natural vegetation here represents the northern extreme of the Upper Sonora Life Zone which extends from northern Mexico to the southern Similkameen and Okanagan valleys in British Columbia. Both shrub-grassland and grassland communities are present; trees are absent. Plant communities present are the antelope brush-bluebunch wheatgrass type on sandy areas around the knolls, the bluebunch wheatgrass-big sagebrush association on clay to sandy loam soils, and sand dropseed-red three-awn grassland on sandy terraces. The latter is one of the most restricted grassland types in British Columbia, now largely supplanted by agricultural land uses.

Wildflowers here include arrowleaf balsamroot, mariposa lily, long-leaved fleabane, hairy golden-aster, white clematis, bitterroot, yellow bell, alumroot, brittle prickly-pear cactus, and desert-parsley.

Wildlife recorded on the reserve includes yellow-bellied racer and gopher snakes, coyotes, and a variety of birds. Birds noted to nest on the site are the California Quail, Western Kingbird and Rock Wren. Other typical species here are the Western Meadowlark, Mourning Dove, Poorwill, Magpie, Northern

Oriole, House Finch, and White-crowned Sparrow.

MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

SIGNIFICANT SPECIES	BC LIST STATUS	COSEWIC STATUS	CF PRIORITY
pale evening primrose	Red listed		2
Behr's Hairstreak	Red listed	Threatened (2000)	1
The Dalles milk-vetch	Red listed		2
Badger	Red listed	Endangered (2000)	1
Douglas rabbitbrush (aka green rabbit-brush)			2
tufted phlox			4
long-leaved phlox			2

THREATS

Climate Change: Changes in precipitation and temperature may change the composition of the grassland protected within the reserve, creating unsuitable habitat for certain species adapted to a shrub-steppe environment. Heavy fuel loads and altered disturbance regimes combined with reduced moisture and higher temperatures may encourage more extreme instances of disturbance which would dramatically alter the present habitat.

Forest health: The antelope brush is thick, old and at risk of uncontrolled burning due to past fire suppression and control of fuel loads, posing risk to antelope brush ecosystem and areas surrounding the reserve.

Non-native species: Baby's breath is displacing native bunchgrasses.

ER WARDEN ACTIVITY

- Control/remove baby's breath
- Inventory significant species
- Monitor invasive plant activity and control or eradicate where possible

SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF SPECIES MENTIONED IN THE FIELD'S LEASE ER ACCOUNT

Flora

- alumroot (*Heuchera* spp.)
- antelope-brush (*Purshia tridentata*)
- aster, golden (*Heterotheca villosa*)
- aster, hairy (*Aster pilosus*)
- baby's breath (*Gypsophila paniculata*)
- balsam-root, arrow-leaved (*Balsamorhiza-sagittata*)
- bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*)

cactus, brittle prickly-pear (*Opuntia fragilis*)
clematis, white (*Clematis ligusticifolia* var. *ligusticifolia*)
desert-parsley (*Lomatium* spp.)
dropseed, sand (*Sporobolus cryptandrus*)
evening-primrose, pale (*Oenothera pallida* ssp. *pallida*)
fleabane, linear-leaved (*Erigeron linearis*)
lily, mariposa (*Calocortus* spp.)
milk-vetch, The Dalles (*Astragalus sclerocaruis*)
phlox, long-leaved (*Phlox longifolia*)
phlox, tufted (*Phlox caespitosa*)
rabbit-brush, green (*Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus* var. *lanceolatus*)
red three-awn (*Aristida purpurea* var. *longiseta*)
sage, bog (*Salvia uliginosa*)
wheatgrass, bluebunch (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*)
yellow bell (*Fritillaria pudica*)

Fauna

Badger (*Taxidea taxus*)
Coyote (*Canis latrans*)
Dove, Mourning (*Zenaida macroura*)
Gopher Snake, *deserticola* spp. (*Pituophis catenifer deserticola*)
Kingbird, Western (*Tyrannus verticalis*)
Finch, House (*Carpodacus mexicanus*)
Behr's Hairstreak (*Satyrium behrii*)
Magpie, Black-billed (*Pica hudsonia*)
Meadowlark, Western (*Stumella neglecta*)
Oriole (*Icterus* spp.)
Poorwill, Common (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii*)
Quail, California (*Callipepla californica*)
Racer, Blue (*Coluber constrictor foxi*)
Sparrow, White-crowned (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)
Woodpecker, Lewis's (*Melanerpes lewis*)
Wren, Rock (*Salpinctes obsoletus*)
