GUTIERREZIA ELEGANS SP. NOV. (ASTERACEAE: ASTEREAE), A SHALE BARREN ENDEMIC OF SOUTHWESTERN COLORADO

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ABSTRACT
Gutierrezia elegans Al Schneider & P. Lyon, sp. nov., is described from outcrops of grayish, argillaceous Mancos Shale in southwestern Colorado. The new species is known only from several populations in and around the developing Lone Mesa State Park in Dolores County, where it is represented by at least 4000 plants. The plants are low, compact subshrubs with woody caudex branches and decumbent-ascending, evenly leafy stems, short-pedunculate heads in congested corymbose clusters, and short, 3-nerved leaves.

RESUMEN
Gutierrezia elegans Al Schneider & P. Lyon, sp. nov., is described from outcrops of grayish, argillaceous Mancos Shale in southwestern Colorado. The new species is known only from several populations in and around the developing Lone Mesa State Park in Dolores County, where it is represented by at least 4000 plants. The plants are low, compact subshrubs with woody caudex branches and decumbent-ascending, evenly leafy stems, short-pedunculate heads in congested corymbose clusters, and short, 3-nerved leaves.

Biological exploration of the developing Lone Mesa State Park in Dolores County, Colorado, has brought to light a previously unknown species of Gutierrezia.


DIFFERENT FROM Gutierrezia pomariensi (S.L. Welsh) S.L. Welsh caulibus brevioribus decumbentibus vel ascendentibus, capitulis minoribus in inflorescentiis congestis dispositis, foliis trinerviis.

Subshrubs from a woody taproot with short-branched woody caudex branches, plants growing vertically 7.5–12.5(–15) cm high. Stems decumbent-ascending, 8–15 cm long, moderately hirtellous. Leaves alternate, sessile at flowering, caudex evenly distributed, blades linear-lanceolate to linear-oblanceolate, mostly 10–16 mm × 2–3 mm, primarily 1-nerved but with a distinct pair of narrower lateral nerves, slightly or not all reduced in size distally, margins entire, surfaces and margins hirtellous. Heads borne mostly in congested corymbose clusters of 2–8, sometimes solitary, peduncles 1–6 mm or rarely to 20 mm from proximal branches of the capitulescence. Involucres turbinate-campanulate, 3–4 mm long, 2.5–3 mm diam. Phyllaries lanceolate-oblong, proximal 4/5 white-indurate, apices triangular to ovate with acute to obtuse tips, green, thickened, gland-dotted. Ray florets 6–8, fertile, corollas yellow, 3–5 mm long, laminae coiling at maturity. Disc florets 6–9, yellow, fertile. Cypselae cylindric, 1–2 mm long, faces without oil cavities, sparsely short-strigose; pappus of 1–2 series of persistent, oblong-lanceolate scales 1–1.5 mm long. Chromosome number unknown.

Flowering late July through early September. Bare Mancos shale outcrops and thin soil over shale,
Gutierrezia elegans scattered to abundant in the barrens and also occurring with Artemisia nova and other species in sites with deeper soil over the shale, Pinus ponderosa and pinyon-juniper on surrounding slopes, 7575–7600 ft (ca. 2500–2550 m). Apparently endemic to southwestern Colorado.

Additional collections examined: Colorado. Dolores Co.: Lone Mesa State Park, type locality, 4 Aug 2008, Schneider and Lyon s.n. (TEX); Lone Mesa State Park, S end of the park, ca. 23 mi N of the town of Dolores, T39N, R14 W, Section 23, ca. 108° 28’W, 37° 42’N, sandy soil over shale, 80% vegetation cover, dominant Artemisia nova and Astragalus haydenianus with Artemisia ludoviciana, Eriogonum alatum, Eriogonum racemosum, Penstemon caception, Astragalus missouriensis var. amphibolus, Heterotheca villosa, Pascopyrum smithii, and Chrysothamnus depressus, slopes 8%, SSE-facing, Pinus ponderosa on surrounding slopes, 7600 ft, 23 Aug 2008, Schneider G-2, with members of the Colorado Native Plant Society (COLO, TEX).

Common name.—Lone Mesa Snakeweed.

Etymology.—We have chosen the specific epithet "elegans" because it summarizes so many of the most obvious visual characteristics of this new species. Gutierrezia elegans is delicate with masses of brilliant yellow flowers topping gracefully arching stems that form into a low, domed symmetry. In short, the plant is elegant.

Gutierrezia elegans is highly distinctive among all its congeners (Lane 1985), especially in its low, subshrubby habit with decumbent-ascending, evenly leafy stems, short-pedunculate heads in congested corymbose clusters, and short, 3-nerved leaves. It presumably may be most closely related to the group of species with a subshrubby habit, deciduous basal leaves, and heads mostly pedunculate and in relatively open arrays (vs. the subshrubby G. sarothrae (Pursh) Britt. & Rusby and G. microcephala (DC.) A. Gray, which have heads mostly sessile or subsessile, in glomerules, often in broad, dense, flat-topped arrays). Additional color pho-
Schneider, A new species of Gutierrezia from Colorado

The following key, which identifies *G. elegans* in the context of similar species, is adapted from the FNANM treatment of *Gutierrezia* (Nesom 2006).

1. Perennial herbs; basal leaves persistent; ray corollas 5–8(–10) mm; disc florets 15–23; Utah __________________ Gutierrezia petradoria (Welsh & Goodrich) S.L. Welsh

   1. Subshrubs; basal leaves not persistent; ray corollas 2–7 mm; disc florets 5–15(–17); Arizona, Colorado, Utah, California.

   2. Phyllary apices thickened; cypselae strigose; Colorado and Utah.

   3. Stems 8–15 cm long, decumbent-ascending; heads mostly in congested corymboid clusters of 2–8, sometimes solitary, peduncles 1–6 mm or rarely to 20 mm from proximal branches of the inflorescence; leaves mostly 10–16 mm long, 3-nerved; involucres 3–4 mm long; Colorado ______________ Gutierrezia elegans Al Schneider & P. Lyon

   3. Stems mostly 20–50 cm long, erect to ascending-erect; heads in open corymb, peduncles mostly 10–40 mm long; leaves mostly 20–40(–60) mm long, 1-nerved; involucres 5–8 mm long; Utah. ____________________________ Gutierrezia pomariensis (S.L. Welsh) S.L. Welsh

   2. Phyllary apices not thickened; cypselae densely strigose-sericeous; Arizona and California.

   4. Stems glabrous; involucres campanulate (as long as wide); cypselae 1–1.2 mm; Arizona ________ Gutierrezia serotina Greene

   4. Stems glabrous or minutely hispidulous; involucres turbinate to cylindrical-turbinate (longer than wide); cypselae 2–2.8 mm; California ____________________________ Gutierrezia californica (D.C.) Torrey & A. Gray

Lone Mesa State Park is situated in the Dolores River drainage, immediately north of the San Juan River drainage and thus was not included in the Four Corners Flora (Heil et al. 2008), although large areas of the...
Mancos Shale also occur in the San Juan drainage. *Gutierrezia sarothrae* and *G. microcephala* are the only species of the genus treated in the Four Corners flora (Nesom 2008), and they also are the only two of the genus previously known from Colorado.

*Gutierrezia elegans* is known from five separate populations in and around Lone Mesa State Park, all within a radius of about three miles. It occurs on San Juan National Forest and Bureau of Land Management land adjacent to the state park. Among its known populations, we estimate that *G. elegans* is represented by a total of over 4000 plants. Plants of the new species at the type locality occur as well-separated individuals on very sparsely vegetated flats (slopes ca. 2%) and sides of shallow washes. They grow along cracks in the bare shale and in thin gravely soil over the shale. Where the shale is not directly exposed, the new species is easily seen to grow in the “crack-lines” of the underlying rock. *Gutierrezia elegans* is among the more abundant species in this habitat. *Pinus ponderosa* occurs on nearby slopes.

At other localities, the soil is deeper and more sandy and *Gutierrezia elegans* occurs less commonly among other species in a more densely vegetated community dominated by *Artemisia nova*. *Gutierrezia elegans* is most abundant at the interface of the barren shale and surrounding sagebrush dominated areas, forming a rim around the barren patches. Also abundant here are *Artemisia ludoviciana*, *Heterotheca villosa*, *Achillea lanulosa*, *Eriogonum racemosum*, *Astragalus haydenianus* and various grasses, with *Pinus ponderosa* on surrounding slopes. This site is at 7800 feet elevation and has slopes of 6–8%.

The rare and recently discovered *Physaria pulvinata* (O’Kane & Reveal 2006) grows with *Gutierrezia elegans* on the shale outcrops within Lone Mesa State Park. The two species are similar in their many-branched caudex and caespitose, mound-forming habit. *Physaria pulvinata* also is known from similar shale barrens in the Miramonte State Wildlife Area of San Miguel Co., about 23 miles north of the Lone Mesa State Park. In addition to these two species, other endemics have been described from Mancos Shale habitats closely clustered in the Four Corners area: *Abronia bolackii* Atwood, Welsh, & Heil, *Proatriplex pleiantha* (W. Weber) Stutz & Chu, *Sclerocactus mesae-verdae* (Boissevain & Davidson) L.D. Benson, and *Xanthisma paradoxum* (Turner & Hartman) Nesom & Turner (New Mexico Rare Plant Technical Council 1999; Nesom & Turner 2007).

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REFERENCES


