

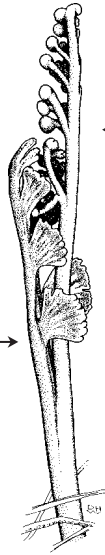
Upswept moonwort

Botrychium ascendens

W. H. Wagner

Fronn divided into dissimilar vegetative blade (trophophore) and spore-bearing segment (sporophore)

Vegetative blade 1.5-5.0 cm long; yellowish-green, once pinnately compound with 4-6 pairs of non-overlapping, upward-directed wedge-shaped, toothed leaflets; lower segments often bearing sporangia on their margins



Sporophore pinnately compound, attached to trophophore midway up leaf stalk, taller and narrower than vegetative blade

Ill. by D.H. Wagner

Perennial herb up to 20 cm tall

Ophioglossaceae

Habitat: Mesic meadows and sandy sites near sea level in Alaska, where it is associated with *Fragaria chiloensis*. In other parts of its range it is typically found in mesic montane meadows and associated with *Fragaria virginiana*.

Similar Species: *B. lunaria* has leaflets that are usually overlapping, mostly entire, lunate (at least a quarter-circle, often more than half a circle) rather than narrowly wedge shaped, and spreading rather than ascending. *B. minganense* has pinnae entire or only slightly toothed and spreading or only slightly ascending. Both of the above species lack sporangia on their basal pinnae.

Notes: *Botrychium ascendens* is now known from a number of widespread sites in western North America but is not common anywhere and almost all populations are small. It is only known from two locations in Alaska. *Botrychium* species can be very difficult to positively identify. Carefully spread and pressed fronds are required for useful specimens (collections can be limited to the above-ground portions of the plant).

References: Cody 1994, 1996; Lellinger 1992; Wagner 1996a, b; Wagner and Wagner 1986, 1993.



Closeup of Botrychium ascendens
photo by W. H. Wagner



Closeup of Botrychium ascendens
photo by D. H. Wagner

