
**Edith Read, Survey for Special Status Plant Species, JSP Property, Santa
Clarita, Los Angeles County, California (November 2007)**

**Survey for Special Status Plant Species
JSB Property, Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County, California**

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Prepared For:

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Introduction

This study assesses potential presence of special status plant species within a survey area in Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County, California referred to as the JSB property (Figure 1). The property is located on a section of the Santa Clara River floodplain, east of Lost Canyon Road and adjacent to the south side of the Antelope Valley freeway (14). The topographic location is within Township 4 North, Range 15 West, Sections 22 (east half) and 23 (west half) of the U.S. Geological Survey Mint Canyon 7.5' quadrangle. The elevation is about 1500 feet above mean sea level.

Methods

Prior to field surveys, records of California Department of Fish and Game's Natural Diversity Database ("CNDDDB") and the California Native Plant Society ("CNPS") were consulted for known occurrences of special status plant species within a radius of about 10 miles, focusing on the watershed of the Santa Clara River. Field surveys were conducted by E. Read on April 1 and April 29, 2007. The entire property was walked, and all plant species observed were recorded. Taxonomy followed The Jepson Manual¹.

Results and Discussion

No special status plant species were observed. Table 1 provides a list of all plant species recorded on site. Table 2 provides details of an assessment for each special status species known to occur within a 10-mile radius of the site. In general, while 2007 was a poor year for conducting rare plant surveys due to exceptionally low winter rainfall, numerous human disturbance factors make the site an unlikely location for rare plants. These factors include a small fenced graveyard, a road and numerous trails, dumping, and high abundance of non-native annual grasses. The grasses reach 100 percent cover on the floodplain section in the eastern third of the site and effectively eliminate this area as quality habitat for rare plants.

While occurrence of rare plants on this property is unlikely based on low habitat quality, results of any survey conducted in the exceptionally dry year of 2007 should be viewed with low confidence. While dense cover by non-native annual grasses occupies a portion of the site, the remainder supports habitat that is largely native (albeit highly disturbed), including cottonwood-willow woodland and alluvial sage scrub. It is recommended that a follow-up survey be conducted following a wetter winter than occurred in 2006-2007, with particular focus on the following species with moderate potential to occur: slender mariposa lily (CNPS List 1B.2), Plummer's mariposa lily (CNPS List 1B.2), and Peirson's morning glory (CNPS List 4.2). None of these species are federal or state listed as rare,

¹ Hickman, J.C. (editor), 1993. *The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California*. University of California Press.

threatened, or endangered, but are considered by the CNPS to be at least fairly threatened in California. Forde Biological Consultants observed a stem and seed head of a mariposa lily species in late 2006 in the eastern portion of the property (A.M. Forde, personal communication to E. Read, 3/29/2007). This material was not evident by the time of the April, 2007 surveys by E. Read and therefore this area should be searched again in future surveys.

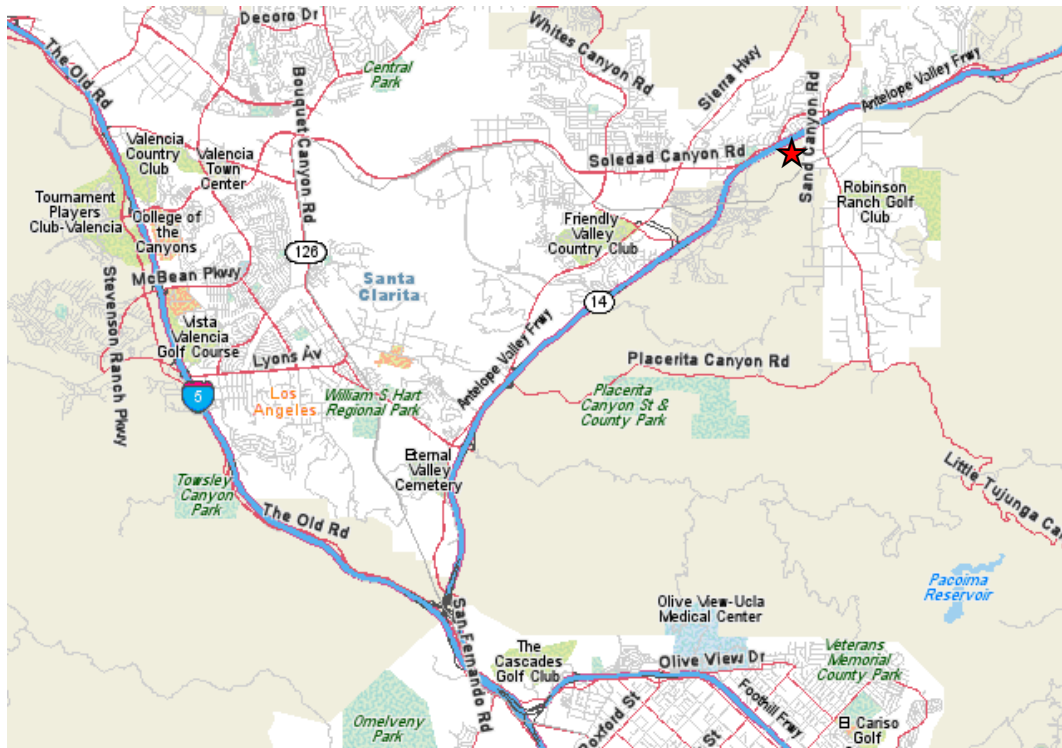


Figure 1. Survey Location

Table 1. Plant Species Observed

Latin Name	Common Name	Native/Exotic	Notes
GYMNOSPERMS		CONIFERS	
Cupressaceae	Cypress Family		
<i>Juniperus californica</i>	California juniper	N	appears planted, near graveyard
DICOTS		FLOWERING PLANTS	
Anacardiaceae	Sumac Family		
<i>Rhus trilobata</i>	skunkbrush	N	
Apiaceae	Carrot Family		
<i>Lomatium californicum</i>	California lomatium	N	
Areceaceae	Palm Family		
<i>Washingtonia filifera</i>	California fan palm	E	appears naturalized; not native to this area
Asteraceae	Sunflower Family		
<i>Ambrosia psilostachya</i>	western ragweed	N	
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	California sagebrush	N	
<i>Artemisia douglasiana</i>	mugwort	N	
<i>Artemisia dracunculus</i>	tarragon	N	
<i>Artemisia tridentata</i>	big sagebrush	N	
<i>Baccharis salicifolia</i>	mulefat	N	
<i>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</i>	rabbitbrush	N	
<i>Gnaphalium californicum</i>	everlasting	N	
<i>Heterotheca grandiflora</i>	telegraph weed	N	
<i>Lasthenia californica</i>	California goldfields	N	
<i>Lepidospartum squamatum</i>	scale broom	N	
Boraginaceae	Borage Family		
<i>Amsinkia</i> sp.	fiddleneck	N	
<i>Cryptantha</i> sp.	popcorn flower	N	
<i>Heliotropium curassavicum</i>	wild heliotrope	N	

Table 1 - Plant Species Observed (continued)

Latin Name	Common Name	Native/Exotic	Notes
Brassicaceae <i>Brassica sp.</i>	Mustard Family mustard	?	
Cactaceae <i>Opuntia basilaris</i> var. <i>basilaris</i> <i>Opuntia parryi</i>	Cactus Family beavertail cactus cane cholla	N N	
Caprifoliaceae <i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Honeysuckle Family elderberry	N	
Chenopodiaceae <i>Chenopodium ambrosioides</i>	Goosefoot Family Mexican tea	E	
Cucurbitaceae <i>Marah macrocarpus</i>	Cucumber Family wild cucumber	N	
Euphorbiaceae <i>Chamaesyce albomarginata</i> <i>Eremocarpus setigerus</i>	Spurge Family rattlesnake weed dove weed	N N	
Fagaceae <i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Oak Family live oak	N	
Geraniaceae <i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Geranium Family red-stem filaree	E	
Grossulariaceae <i>Ribes malvaceum</i>	Gooseberry Family chaparral current	N	
Hydrophyllaceae <i>Eriodictyon crassifolium</i>	Water-Leaf Family yerba santa	N	
Lamiaceae <i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	Mint Family horehound	E	

Table 1 - Plant Species Observed (continued)

Latin Name	Common Name	Native/Exotic	Notes
Nyctaginaceae <i>Mirabilis bigelovii</i>	Four-O'Clock Family wishbone bush	N	
Onagraceae <i>Camissonia bistorta</i>	Evening-Primrose Family sun-cups	N	
Polygonaceae <i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i> ssp. <i>fasciculatum</i>	Buckwheat Family coastal buckwheat	N	
Rosaceae <i>Adenostoma fasciculatum</i>	Rose Family chamise	N	
Salicaceae <i>Populus fremontii</i> <i>Salix goodingii</i> <i>Salix lasiolepis</i> <i>Salix cf. lutea</i>	Willow Family Fremont cottonwood Gooding's willow arroyo willow yellow willow	N N N N	
Solanaceae <i>Datura wrightii</i> <i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	Nightshade Family Jimson weed tree tobacco	N E	
Tamaricaceae <i>Tamarix ramosissima</i>	Tamarix Family saltcedar	E	
MONOCOTS	GRASSES AND ALLIES		
Liliaceae <i>Dichelostemma capitatum</i> <i>Yucca whipplei</i>	Lily Family blue dicks Whipple's yucca	N N	
Poaceae <i>Arundo donax</i> <i>Avena fatua</i>	Grass Family giant reed wild oat	E E	

Table 1 - Plant Species Observed (continued)

Latin Name	Common Name	Native/Exotic	Notes
<i>Bromus rubens</i>	red brome	E	
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	foxtail barley	E	
<i>Leymus condensatus</i>	giant rye	N	
<i>Nassella sp.</i>	needlegrass	N	

Table 2
Special Status Plant Species Occurrence Assessment

Note: please refer to report text regarding discussion of probability of detecting rare plants in 2007.

Common and Latin Names	Status			Habitat Association(s)	Elevation Range, Life Form, and Flowering Period	Assessment Summary
	Federal	State	CNPS			
Mt. Pinos onion <i>Allium howellii</i> var. <i>clokeyi</i>	--	--	1B.3	Great Basin scrub, pinyon-juniper woodland	1300-1850m PH(b) April - June	Not Observed ; <i>not expected</i> to occur based on lack of suitable habitat. No <i>Allium</i> species observed during surveys.
Braunton's milk-vetch <i>Astragalus brauntonii</i>	FE	--	1B.1	Closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal sage, valley and foothill grassland/ recent burns or disturbed areas- usually carbonate soils.	4-640m PH March-July	Not Observed ; <i>not expected</i> to occur; marginal habitat due to absence of carbonate soils; no <i>Astragalus</i> species were observed during surveys.
Nevin's barberry <i>Berberis nevinii</i>	FE	CE	1B.1	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, riparian scrub, esp. steep north-facing slopes or in low grade sandy washes.	290-1575m SHR March - April	Not Observed ; <i>low potential to occur</i> due to marginal quality habitat on site; observable year-round due to evergreen habit and unique leaf morphology but was not observed during surveys; can be <i>presumed absent</i> from this site.
California filaree (round-leaved filaree) <i>California macrophylla</i> (formerly <i>Erodium macrophyllum</i>)	--	--	1B.1	Cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland, esp. clay soils.	15 – 1200m A(B)H March-July	Not observed ; <i>low potential to occur</i> due to marginal quality habitat and lack of suitable soils.
Slender mariposa lily <i>Calochortus clavatus</i> var. <i>gracilis</i>	--	--	1B.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub; shaded foothill canyons, often on grassy slopes.	420-760m PH(b) April-June	Not Observed ; <i>moderate potential to occur</i> due to presence of suitable habitat, albeit highly disturbed.
Plummer's mariposa lily <i>Calochortus plummerae</i>	--	--	1B.2	Coastal sage scrub, chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest; rocky and sandy sites, usually of granitic or alluvial material; can be very common after fire.	90-1610m PH(b) May-July	Not Observed ; <i>moderate potential for occurrence</i> ; habitat types, soils, elevation, all suitable, although site is highly disturbed.

Table 2 – Special Status Plant Species Occurrence Assessment (continued)

Common and Latin Names	Status			Habitat Association(s)	Elevation Range, Life Form, and Flowering Period	Assessment Summary
	Federal	State	CNPS			
Peirson's morning glory <i>Calystegia peirsonii</i>	--	--	4.2	Coastal sage scrub, chaparral, chenopod scrub, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest; often in disturbed areas along roadsides or in grassy, open areas.	390-1470m PH May-June	Not Observed; moderate potential for occurrence based on limited habitat present.
Southern tarplant <i>Centromadia parryi</i> ssp. <i>australis</i>	--	--	1B.1	Estuary and marsh margins, vernally mesic grasslands, and vernal pools; often in disturbed sites and sometimes in alkaline soils with saltgrass.	0-425m AH May-November	Not Observed; low potential to occur due to marginal quality habitat.
San Fernando Valley spineflower <i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>fernandina</i>	FC	CE	1B.1	Sandy soils, coastal scrub.	0-1035m AH April-June	Not Observed; low potential to occur due to marginal habitat quality.
White-bracted spineflower <i>Chorizanthe xanti</i> var. <i>leucotheca</i>	--	--	1B.2	Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon-juniper woodland.	300-1200m AH April-June	Not Observed; not expected on site due to lack of habitat.
Santa Susana tarplant <i>Deinandra minthornii</i>	--	CR	1B.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub; sandstone outcrops and crevices.	280-760m SHR July-October	Not Observed; not expected on site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Slender-horned spineflower <i>Dodecahema leptoceras</i>	FE	CE	1B.1	Chaparral, alluvial fan sage scrub; flood-deposited terraces and washes.	200-760m AH April-June	Not Observed; low potential to occur on site due to marginal quality habitat.
San Gabriel bedstraw <i>Galium grande</i>	--	--	1B.2	Cismontane woodland, chaparral, broadleaf upland forest, lower montane coniferous forest; open chaparral and low open oak forest, on rocky slopes.	425-1200m PH April-June?	Not Observed; low potential for occurrence on site due to marginal habitat.
Los Angeles sunflower <i>Helianthus nuttallii</i> ssp. <i>parishii</i>	--	--	1A*	Marshes and swamps.	5-1675 m PH August-October	Not Observed; not expected on site due to lack of suitable habitat.
Ross' pitcher sage <i>Lepechinia rossii</i>	--	--	1B.2	Chaparral; soil derived from fine-grained reddish sedimentary rock.	305-788 m SHR May-June	Not Observed; not expected on site due to lack of suitable habitat.

Table 2 – Special Status Plant Species Occurrence Assessment (continued)

Common and Latin Names	Status			Habitat Association(s)	Elevation Range, Life Form, and Flowering Period	Assessment Summary
	Federal	State	CNPS			
Davidson's bush mallow <i>Malacothamnus davidsonii</i>	--	--	1B.2	Coastal scrub, riparian woodland, chaparral; sandy washes.	180-855m SHR June-September	Not Observed ; prior to surveys, moderate potential to occur on site due to presence of suitable habitat. No <i>Malacothamnus</i> , even common species, observed on site.
Spreading navarretia <i>Navarretia fossalis</i>	FT	--	1B.1	Chenopod scrub, marshes, playas, vernal pools.	30-1300m AH April-May	Not Observed ; not expected due to lack of suitable habitat.
Short-joint beavertail <i>Opuntia basilaris</i> var. <i>brachyclada</i>	--	--	1B.2	Chaparral, Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon-juniper woodland, riparian woodland; sandy soil or coarse, granitic loam.	425-1800m SUC May-June	Not Observed ; despite dry year, this species would have been detectable if present; based on survey results can be presumed absent from this site.
California orcutt grass <i>Orcuttia californica</i>	FE	CE	1B.1	Vernal pools.	15-660m AH May-June	Not Observed ; not expected due to lack of habitat.
Rayless ragwort <i>Senecio aphanactis</i>	--	--	2.2	Cismontane woodland, coastal scrub; drying alkaline flats.	20-575m AH February-March	Not Observed ; not expected due to lack of habitat. Last known record from region was "Saugus" (Newhall quadrangle) in 1901.
Greata's aster <i>Symphyotrichum greatae</i>	--	--	1B.3	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, esp. mesic canyons	800-1500m PH August-October	Not Observed ; low potential to occur due to lack of records for Mint Canyon quadrangle and marginal habitat (mesic habitat present is heavily infested with 100 percent cover of non-native annual grasses).

Table 2 – Special Status Plant Species Occurrence Assessment (continued)

STATUS KEY:

Federal

FE: Federally Endangered
FT: Federally Threatened
FC: Federal Candidate

State

CE: State Endangered
CT: State Threatened
CR: State Rare

CNPS

- List 1A*: CNPS still lists as presumed extinct in California. This status may be erroneous because species may have been recently rediscovered – however, CNDDDB reports the “rediscovered” population along the south edge of the Santa Clara River floodplain near Newhall may be a new taxon, not *H. nuttallii* ssp. *nuttallii*.
- List 1B.1: Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California.
- List 1B.2: Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; fairly threatened in California.
- List 1B.3: Rare, threatened, or endangered elsewhere; rare but currently not very threatened in California;
- List 2.2: Rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere; fairly threatened in California.
- List 4.2: Plants of limited distribution; fairly threatened in California.

LIFE FORM KEY:

AH: Annual Herb
A(B)H: Annual to Biennial Herb
PH: Perennial Herb
SHR: Shrub
SUC: Succulent
(b): bulb