

VERNAL POOL SMALLSCALE (*ATRIPLEX PERSISTENS*)

California Native Plant Society List 1B



Description

Vernal pool smallscale is an annual herb in the goosefoot family (Chenopodiaceae). Other common names by which it is known are vernal pool saltbush and persistent-fruited saltscale. The plants appear silvery-green because the leaves and branches are covered with whitish, mealy scales. The 4 to 8-inch (10 to 20-cm) long stems may be upright or curved outward, and the branches originate from the base. Vernal pool smallscale has tiny, egg-shaped leaves with smooth margins, although their bases range from heart-shaped to triangular. Male and female reproductive parts are borne in separate, inconspicuous flowers between July and October. The tiny, winged fruits remain on the branches even after the plants have died, a characteristic reflected in the scientific name of the species.

Habitat

Vernal pool smallscale is found only in large, alkaline vernal pools, where it occurs in the bottoms of the basins as opposed to the edges.

Range/distribution

Within the project area, this species has been reported from Stanislaus (extirpated), Merced, and Tulare counties. It has also been reported from Glenn and Solano counties.

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References

- Stutz, H.C., and G.L. Chu. 1993. *Atriplex persistens* (Chenopodiaceae): a new species from California. *Madrono* 40(4):209-213
- Tibor, D.P., editor. 2001. *California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California*. Sixth edition. California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, 387 pp.