

Changed to California Rare Plant Rank 3.2 in the CNPS Inventory on September 28, 2011

**Rare Plant Status Review: *Phacelia ramosissima* var. *australitoralis*
Rank change from 4.2 to 3.2**

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August 24, 2011

Changes made to the original document appear in blue text.

Phacelia ramosissima var. *australitoralis* was added to rank 4.2 (plants of limited distribution - a watch list) of the CNPS Inventory in 2007. In 2009, the taxon was considered for deletion from the Inventory, due to the treatment from *The Jepson Manual, Second Edition*, which does not recognize any varieties of this species (available online at http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/tjm2/review/treatments/boraginaceae_may_6.html#37557). According to Bob Patterson (pers. comm. 2009), "after many hours of looking at material, we have decided in fact not to formally recognize varieties of that species for *TJM 2*. The simple reason is that the recognized names are so jumbled, and the characters purportedly distinguishing them do not work much of the time. In short, a lot of work needs to be done on this group before we can distinguish what is what in this species. We didn't wish to promote the confusion any further. All varietal names are mentioned in a note in the species description, but no keys."

Despite the new treatment, reviewers on the Rare Plant Status Review Forum could not come to a consensus over whether to delete it from the Inventory. Many reviewers were in favor of deletion, but others stated the case for continued inclusion. J. Mark Porter (2009) highlighted Patterson's remark that the species is not well-understood, and that more research is required in order to understand its varieties. Others stressed the threat to the variety, such as sea level rise and development, given its distribution along the southern and central California coast. J. Mark Porter also suggested that the continued inclusion of *P. ramosissima* var. *australitoralis* in the CNPS Inventory could promote research on the variation within the species.

Phacelia ramosissima var. *australitoralis* should not be considered protected in coastal Los Angeles County; where plans for expansion still occur and the current state of its habitat is being extensively overrun with noxious weeds (D. Cooper pers. comm. 2011). Furthermore, any taxon like this that occurs near the ocean in San Diego County should be protected due to continued impacts to these coastal habitats (J. Rebman pers. comm. 2011).

The status of *P. ramosissima* var. *australitoralis* as a distinct taxon is still very unclear, but it remains to be of conservation concern. Therefore CNPS and CNDDDB recommend changing it to rank 3.2 (plants about which we need more

information - a review list). If a more definitive treatment of the species becomes available, the variety will again be considered for re-ranking or possible deletion from the Inventory at that time.

Recommended Actions

CNPS: Re-rank from California Rare Plant Rank 4.2 to 3.2

CNDDDB: Retain rank G5?T3 / S3.2

Revised CNPS Inventory record:

Phacelia ramosissima Lehm. var. *austrolitoralis* Munz

south coast branching phacelia

Boraginaceae

Rank 3.2

Los Angeles (LAX), Monterey (MNT) ?, Orange (ORA), Santa Barbara (SBA), San Diego (SDG), San Luis Obispo (SLO) ?, Ventura (VEN)

Baja California

Del Mar (022B) 32117H2, Rancho Santa Fe (035C) 33117A2, San Luis Rey (036A) 33117B3, Encinitas (036D) 33117A3, Dana Point (052B) 33117D6, San Juan Capistrano (070C) 33117E6, Newport Beach (071B) 33117F8, La Habra (088B)? 33117H8, Anaheim (088C)? 33117G8, Venice (090B) 33118H4, Triunfo Pass (113C) 34118A8, Point Dume (113D) 34118A7, Oxnard (114B) 34119B2, Point Mugu (114D) 34119A1, Ventura (141D) 34119C3, Carpinteria (142A) 34119D5, Santa Barbara (142B) 34119D6, Goleta (143A) 34119D7, Dos Pueblos Canyon (143B) 34119D8, Point Conception (145B)? 34120D4, Lompoc (170B) 34120F4, Surf (171A) 34120F5, Point Arguello (171C) 34120E6, Tranquillon Mtn. (171D) 34120E5, Zaca Lake (194D) 34120G1, Orcutt (195C) 34120G4, Casmalia (196D) 34120G5, Nipomo (220C)? 35120A4, Oceano (221D)? 35120A5, Monterey (366C)? 36121E8, Santa Cruz Island B (SCZB) 33119H6, Santa Cruz Island D (SCZD) 33119H4, San Miguel Island East (SMIE) 33120H3, San Miguel Island West (SMIW) 33120H4
Sandy, sometimes rocky, chaparral, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, marshes and swamps (coastal salt); elevation 6-300 meters.

Perennial herb; blooms March to August.

Previously on List 4.2. Characters distinguishing the varieties of *P. ramosissima* do not work most of the time; needs further study. Occurrences from MON and SLO counties may be misidentified. Many collections old; need field surveys.

Threatened by development. [Possibly threatened by non-native plants.](#)