

**Rare Plant Survey Update
March, 2001**

Contract Surveyors: Brent Johnson, Lara Cushing

Over fifty populations in four distinct sites were surveyed in March.

Marin Headlands:

Arabis blepharophylla: 29 populations; Habitat: grass outcrops on thin soil, near-vertical road cuts.

Erysimum fransicanum: 7 populations; Habitat: Grass outcrops and vertical cliff-faces.

Sweeney Ridge:

Arabis blepharophylla: 1 population; Habitat: Grass outcrops surrounded by coastal scrub.

Erysimum fransicanum: 1 pop.; Habitat: Ridgertop along road corridor and adjacent coastal scrub.

San Francisco Watershed:

Fritillaria lileacea: 2 populations. Habitat: Serpentine Grassland. This plant occurs within the watershed along I-280. There may have been a very early bloom this year. In mid-march a cursory search found only a few plants. Two weeks later, three surveyors methodically walked through the entire site and found only a few scattered mature fruits and withered flowers. A less likely scenario is that they were dormant this year. It is more reasonable to assume that the bloom was in late Feb-early march. I recommend next year to make a preliminary visit to the site the no later than the last week in February.

Calochortus umbellatus: 1 potential population. Habitat: Serpentine grasslands. There have been anecdotal accounts of *C. umbellatus* occurring in the serpentine grasslands along I-280. No *C. umbellatus* in the serpentine grassland was observed this year. I will continue to look for signs in subsequent visits in April.

Erysimum fransicanum: 9 populations + several new populations; Habitat: Locally common along ridge tops and serpentine grasslands in the watershed. A few scattered populations in the coastal scrub are located at the base of slopes along roads. Most of the mapped populations are located directly along road corridors. Several large new populations were surveyed this year along the ridge tops.

Arabis blepharophylla: 3 populations; Habitat: grassy outcrops on thin soil surrounded by coastal scrub and near vertical roadcuts.

Dirca occidentalis: 3 populations (not done surveying); Habitat: Coastal Scrub, riparian. Several additional populations have been mapped and surveyed this year. When the surveys began, the *D. occidentalis* had already dropped its flowers and was beginning to form fruits. This made it difficult to identify unless you were in close proximity to the plant. Areas that were surveyed and mapped were likely undercounted this year due to the difficulty of seeing the plants from a distance. It is likely that this plant is more abundant in the watershed than the surveys presently show.

Nicasio Ridge/Devils Gulch

Dirca occidentalis: 1 population; Habitat: bay laurel forest. Surveyed in late Feb. when population was in full flower.

Castilleja affinis ssp. *neglecta*: 1 population: This population is growing on Nicasio Ridge in Serpentine Grasslands. This population was just beginning to flower in the first week of April. Will probably be at peak bloom in April.

Calochortus umbellatus: 1 population: Serpentine Grasslands. This plant was flowering on March 31. A census was done but came up with far fewer individuals than last years count. It may have been earlier than peak bloom. A follow up will be done to ensure that the census was done at peak bloom.

Fritillaria lileacea: This was just beginning to emerge on Mar. 31. It will be surveyed in April.

Ceanothus sp. *nova*: This was in flower on March 31. Photos were taken to document dieback. Many of the shrubs appear to be re-sprouting. What appeared to be old tussock moth egg cases were observed in very small numbers.

Ft. Funston:

Erysimum fransicanum: Habitat: coastal dune habitat. Populations were surveyed with NPS volunteer Ingrid Cabala. Ingrid was able to tell me which populations are plantings and which are original.