

Rare Plant Status Review: *Eriogonum mensicola*
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Background

Eriogonum mensicola is a perennial herb in the Polygonaceae. In the past, *E. mensicola* was treated as *E. panamintense* var. *mensicola* and *E. panamintense* ssp. *mensicola*. In *The Jepson Manual* (1993) it was considered to be a synonym of *E. panamintense*. More recently, *E. mensicola* is included as a full species in *The Jepson Desert Manual* (2002) and *The Flora of North America* (Vol. 5), and will be included in *The Jepson Manual* (2nd ed.). It is distinguished from other *Eriogonum* taxa based on floral and leaf characteristics. *E. mensicola* flowers between July and September.

E. mensicola grows in rocky or gravelly flats and slopes in Great Basin scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland, and upper montane coniferous forest habitats from 1800 to 2805 meters in elevation.

In California, *E. mensicola* is known from approximately 10 occurrences in Inyo County, and one population in Sheep Mountains of Clark County, Nevada. In California, *E. mensicola* is known primarily from the White and Inyo Mountains, and the Panamint and Coso Ranges. Since herbarium specimens are the main source for most of the known locations, some of the sites are vague. More detailed location information for some occurrences is needed to correctly map *E. mensicola*. *E. mensicola* is ranked by NatureServe as G2G3, and is ranked as S1 (<6 occurrences) in Nevada. No information is available about the population sizes of *E. mensicola* at any of the known occurrences.

E. panamintense var. *mensicola* is currently included on the CNPS Considered But Rejected (CBR) List. The CNPS Inventory states that it is, "a synonym of *E. panamintense*, a common taxon." Based on current taxonomic treatments, this statement is no longer accurate. Communication with experts of California's desert flora indicates that *E. mensicola* may be more common than the number of herbarium collections suggest. James Reveal (pers. comm. 2008), however, indicates that *E. mensicola*, "has been collected for some 80 years or so, and that is not a bad record as folks tend to collect it because it is sort of odd-looking."

No information is available about threats to any of the occurrences of *E. mensicola*. Although the ownership of the occurrences of *E. mensicola* is unknown, much of the land in the range of this species is publicly-owned. Attempts should be made to re-locate historical collections of *E. mensicola*, and suitable habitat within and beyond its known range should be searched to locate and document additional occurrences.

Based on the available information, CNPS and CNDDDB recommend that *E. mensicola* be added to CNPS List 1B.3. If, however, if reviewers indicate that *E. mensicola* is too common for List 1B, we will consider placing it on List 4.

Recommended Actions

CNPS: Add to CNPS List 1B.3

CNDDDB: Add to CNDDDB as G2G3 / S2

Please review the draft CNPS Inventory record below, respond Yes or No on the proposal to add this species to the Inventory and CNDDDB, and provide any edits/comments. If responding No, please provide supporting information.

Draft CNPS Inventory Record

Eriogonum mensicola S. Stokes

Pinyon Mesa buckwheat

Polygonaceae

List 1B.3

Inyo; Nevada

Telescope Peak (302A) 3611721, Maturango Peak NE (303A) 3611723, Cerro

Gordo Peak (350D) 3611755, Jackass Canyon (349D) 3611755, Coso Peak

(304B) 3611726, White Top Mountain (304B) 3611774

Pinyon and juniper woodland, Great Basin Scrub, upper montane coniferous forest / rocky or gravelly; elevation 1800-2805 meters.

Perennial herb. Blooms July-September

Known in California from fewer than 20 occurrences. See *Leaflets of Western Botany* 3 (1): 15-18 (1941) for original description.