

Rare Plant Status Review: *Berberis harrisoniana*
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with assistance from Lynda Ives (CNPS Intern)
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Background

Berberis harrisoniana is a rare, evergreen shrub previously believed to be endemic to Arizona and known only from the Kofa, Ajo, and Sand Tank Mountains. It is considered to be a relict species related to *B. trifoliolata* from southeastern Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Anderson and DeGroot published the first California occurrence of *Berberis harrisoniana* as a Noteworthy Collection in Madrono 51(4):395 (2004). The single California occurrence is located on the east side of Whipple Mountains Wilderness area, just below the summit of Cupcake Butte and north of Whipple Wash in San Bernardino County. The main colony is 10 x 20 meters in size, and a few additional colonies occur nearby. Plants were growing in steep talus coves and associated with rock outcrops. Associated species reported in the Madrono article include *Quercus turbinella*, *Acacia greggii*, *Eriogonum fasciculatum*, *E. wrightii*, *Brickellia atractyloides*, *Ephedra* sp., and *Galium* sp. In Arizona, only eight occurrences are known and, the species generally inhabits shady sites and grows on talus slopes along the bases of steep cliffs and canyons. There are no immediate threats to its survival in Arizona because it occurs in remote, infrequently visited areas. Similarly, in California, the threats appear minimal due to the location of plants in inaccessible sites within a designated wilderness area. Currently, *Berberis harrisoniana* is known in California from only one occurrence and an extremely limited area and requires review for inclusion in both the CNPS Inventory and the CNDDB.

Recommended Actions

CNPS: Add to CNPS List 1B

CNDDB: Add to CNDDB as G1G2 / S1.3

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

Draft CNPS Inventory Record

Berberis harrisoniana Kearney & Peebles

Berberidaceae

"Kofa Barberry"

List 1B / RED 3-1-2

San Bernardino, Arizona

121D [Whipple Wash/3411433]

Mojavean desert scrub / rocky, talus; elevation 840 meters.

Evergreen shrub, blooms January-March.

Known in California from only one occurrence in the Whipple Mountains. Not in *The Jepson Manual*. See *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences* 29:477 (1939) for original description, and Madrono 51(4): 395 (2004) for information on first California record.

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