

Rare Plant Status Review: *Digitaria californica*
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with assistance from Patrick McIntyre (CNPS)
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Background

Digitaria californica is a perennial bunchgrass in the Poaceae. *Digitaria californica* is known from Arizona, Colorado, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas in the United States as well as from Mexico, Central America and South America. This species is not included in the Jepson Manual (1993); however, it is indicated as a possible new addition. *Digitaria californica* is described in the Noteworthy Collection of *Madrono* 52 (2005) as the first report and collection for California (specimen collected in October of 2003). This is significant as it extends the western range of the species. In addition, the Consortium of California Herbaria has a collection of this plant from San Bernardino County (specimen collected in November of 2005). This latter collection was made in the Eastern Mojave Desert near Rock Springs in San Bernardino County at an elevation of 1490 m; while the collection reported in *Madrono* was collected at 290 m elevation in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park in eastern San Diego County and consists of about 100 plants. In San Diego County, *Digitaria californica* is described as occurring on a rocky schist hillside; while populations of the species in other states generally occur on open plains. Associated species with the San Bernardino population include *Mirabilis bigelovii*, *Prunus fasciculata*, *Achantherum speciosum*, *Erioneuron pulchellum*, and *Yucca schidigera*. The collector of the *Digitaria californica* in San Bernardino County mentions recreational fire as a possible threat. In other states, *Digitaria californica* is considered a highly palatable pasture grass that is very resistant to grazing. Since *Digitaria* is known in California from only two occurrences it requires review for inclusion in both the CNPS Inventory and the CNDDDB.

Recommended Actions

CNPS: Add to CNPS List 2.3

CNDDDB: Add to CNDDDB as G5 / 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 CNDDDB, and provide any edits/comments. If responding No, please provide supporting information.

Draft CNPS Inventory Record

***Digitaria californica* (Benth.)** **Henr.**

Poaceae

"Arizona cottontop"

List 2.3

San Bernardino, San Diego; Arizona, Baja California, New Mexico, South America, Texas and elsewhere

032C [Earthquake Valley/3311614], 200A [Pinto Valley/3511523]

Sonoran and Mojave desert scrub / rocky; elevation 290-1490 meters.

Perennial herb; blooms July to November.

Known in California from only two occurrences in San Diego and San Bernardino Counties. See *Bot. Voy. Sulph.* 55 (1881) for original description and *Madrono* 52(4): 271 (2005) for information on the first record in California.