

Added to California Rare Plant Rank 4.3 on December 19, 2011**Rare Plant Status Review: *Eriogonum elegans*****Proposed New Add to Rank 4.3, G3 / S3**

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Changes made to the original document appear in blue text.

Background

Eriogonum elegans is an annual herb in the Polygonaceae family that is endemic to California from the San Francisco Bay Area south to the western Transverse Ranges (*The Jepson Manual, Second Edition; TJM 2*). It is included in the *Flora of North America, Vol. 5 (FNA)*; available online at http://www.efloras.org/florataxon.aspx?flora_id=1&taxon_id=250060268), *TJM 2* (available online at http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/tjm2/review/treatments/polygonaceae_all.html#24764), and *The Jepson Manual* (1993). When Greene (1891) originally described *E. elegans* he placed it as a close relative of *Eriogonum saxatile* (subgenus *Eucycla*; group 4 in *TJM 2* treatment), but it is now placed in subgenus *Oregonium* (*TJM 2*, Reveal 2011). The species was formerly treated as *Eriogonum baileyi* ssp. *elegans* by Munz (1959), so it is understandable that there is considerable overlap in both morphology and distribution between *E. elegans* and *E. baileyi*. *Eriogonum elegans* has smaller flowers, ranging from 1-1.5 mm, as opposed to *E. baileyi*'s 1.5 – 2(3) mm flowers (*TJM 2*, *FNA*). The perianth of *E. elegans* is generally glabrous, while the perianth of *E. baileyi* is glandular. One exception to this, however, occurs in the inner coastal ranges, where *E. elegans* sometimes has a glandular perianth (Reveal 2011). Also, *E. elegans* has glabrous flowering stems, while those of *E. baileyi* range from glabrous to tomentose (*TJM 2*, *FNA*). The two species overlap in their distribution, with both occurring in the Transverse Ranges and the south coast ranges (*TJM 2*). Despite the overlap in range and some morphological characters, the two species are distinct and apparently do not intergrade (*FNA*). *Eriogonum elegans* flowers from May to November.

Eriogonum elegans occurs in valley and foothill grassland and cismontane woodland habitats (Munz 1959). It is found on sandy or gravelly soils throughout its range (*TJM 2*). *Eriogonum elegans* often occurs in washes or dry river and creek beds, and is sometimes also found in similar substrates along roadsides (Consortium of California Herbaria 2011). It ranges in elevation from 200 to 1525 meters.

Throughout its range, *E. elegans* is known from approximately 40 ~~37~~ occurrences. This California endemic is ranked G3 (Vulnerable) by NatureServe (2011), but is currently unranked in California. According to *TJM 2*, it occurs in the South Coast Ranges, Western Transverse Ranges, and the San Francisco Bay Region. It is fairly rare along the coast, but can be locally common to abundant in inner coast ranges (*FNA*). The *Flora of North America* treatment places it from Santa Clara County south along the coast to as far as Ventura County, and into Fresno County. However, we have been unable to find documentation of *E. elegans* or *E. baileyi* populations in either Santa

Clara or Fresno counties. A record of *Eriogonum elegans* on Calflora from Los Angeles County, which would extend the range of the species to the south, is actually a misidentification (J. Strong pers. comm. 2011).

Of the 40 ~~37~~ known occurrences, **at least** 31 are historical (occurrences not seen in the past 20 years are considered historical by the CNDDDB). About one quarter of the known occurrences are on lands with some degree of protection, including Department of Defense, USFS, NPS, and regional park lands. Due to the previous treatment of *Eriogonum elegans* as a subspecies of *Eriogonum baileyi*, the identity of specimens determined to be *Eriogonum baileyi* at the species level is questionable. There are 167 records in the Consortium of California Herbaria (CCH) that are labeled as *Eriogonum baileyi*, without any infraspecific determination; 34 of these records are from counties where *E. elegans* is known to occur. Approximately 100 specimens at the Santa Barbara Botanical Garden Herbarium (SBBG), including 30 from counties known to have *E. elegans*, were recently reviewed by D. Wilken, leading to the identification of only two additional collections from Monterey and Ventura counties, but no additional occurrences. These records are expected to be updated in the CCH in November, 2011 (D. Wilken pers. comm. 2011). Additionally, L. Gross confirmed the identity of a specimen from San Luis Obispo County labeled as *E. baileyi*, with two duplicates at the Jepson Herbarium (JEPS; E. Gardner pers. comm. 2011). One additional specimen from Santa Barbara County (*Hrusa* 16676, CDA30262) has not been reviewed.

Threats to *E. elegans* are not currently known. However, due to its limited distribution and frequency, it should be considered of conservation concern.

Based on the available information, CNPS and CNDDDB recommend that *Eriogonum elegans* be added to California Rare Plant Rank 4.3. If current records of *Eriogonum elegans* are later found to be an under representation of its actual distribution and frequency, it will be re-evaluated by CNPS at that time.

Recommended Actions:

CNPS: Add to CNPS 4.3

CNDDDB: Add to CNDDDB G3 / S3

Draft CNPS Inventory Record

Eriogonum elegans Greene

elegant wild buckwheat

Polygonaceae

Rank 4.3

Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura

Bear Canyon (319D) 3612113, Bickmore Canyon (363C) 3612152, Bradley (294D)

3512077, Caldwell Mesa (220A) 3512023, Camatta Ranch (245A) 3512043, Dos

Pueblos Canyon (143B) 3411948, Lompoc (170B) 3412064, Lopez Point (320D)

3612115, Mt. Wilson (110A) ~~3411821~~, Panoche Pass (363A) 3612161, Parkfield (292B)

3512084, Paso Robles (269B) 3512066, Rancho Nuevo Creek (166B) 3411964, Reliz

Canyon (319A) 3612123, Reyes Peak (166A) 3411963, San Benito Mtn. (339C) 3612036, ~~San Jacinto Peak (083C) 3311676~~, San Miguel (293C) 3512076, San Simeon (271B) 3512162, Santa Margarita (246A) 3512045, Seaside (366D) 3612157, Smith Mountain (316D) 3612015, Stockdale Mountain (293A) 3512085, Tar Spring Ridge (220B) 3512024, Tres Pinos (385D) 3612173, Wheeler Springs (166D) 3411953
Cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland / usually sandy or gravelly, often washes, sometimes roadsides; elevation 200-1525 meters.
Annual herb. Blooms May - November.
Similar to *E. baileyi*. See *Pittonia* 2:161-216 (1891) for original description.