

Rare Plant Status Review: *Imperata brevifolia*

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Background

Imperata brevifolia is a perennial grass known in California from approximately 6 extant occurrences (Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Bernardino Counties) and approximately 21 historic occurrences, most of which are thought to be extirpated (see attached list of California occurrences). Records from Butte, Tehama, and Lake Counties are located north of the historic range of this taxon and may represent local escapes from cultivation. The Flora of North America describes *I. brevifolia* as formerly ranging throughout moist sites in the desert southwest (CA, AZ, NV, UT, TX, MEX), but as currently restricted to Grand Canyon National Park. However, extant populations have recently been documented in California and Nevada. The species is listed as S1 in Utah, and is listed as S1S2 in Nevada where it is also on the Nevada Native Plant Society 'Watch List' for species which may be vulnerable to becoming rare or endangered. This species had been discussed as a possible addition to the CNPS Inventory by Fred Hrusa and Dieter Wilken prior to the 6th edition of the Inventory. However, progress in reviewing the species was delayed as *Imperata brevifolia* was mistakenly classified as a noxious weed by the California Department of Food and Agriculture from ca. 1960 until 2004, due to concerns over a population of the species which had colonized an agricultural canal during the 1950's. Threats to this species include habitat loss to development and agriculture. Historic collections in Inyo County may be extant and need field work. As *Imperata brevifolia* is known from only six extant California occurrences and is thought to be rare over much of its historic range, this species requires review for inclusion in both the CNPS Inventory and the CNDDB.

Recommended Actions

CNPS: Add to CNPS List 2.1

CNDDDB: Add to CNDDDB as G2? / S2.1?

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

***Imperata brevifolia* Vasey**

Poaceae

"California satintail"

List 2.1

Butte, Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Lake*, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Tulare, Ventura; Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, Baja California

Coastal scrub, chaparral, riparian scrub, mojavean desert scrub, meadows and seeps (alkali) / mesic; elevation 0-500 meters.

Perennial herb (rhizomatous), blooms Sep-May

004B [Calexico/3211564], 058B [McCoy Wash/3311466], 070D [Canada Gobernado/3811755], 083B [White Water/3311686], 083D [Palm Springs/3311675], 106A [Keller Peak/3411721], 106B [Harrison Mtn./3411722], 106C? [Redlands/3411712], 106D? [Yucaipa/3411711], 107A [San Bernardino North/3411723], 109A? [Glendora/3411727], 109B [Azusa/3411728], 136C [Condor Peak/3411728], 141A [Matilija/3411945], 239B? [Oil Center/3511848], 239C? [Lamont/3511838], 240A? [Oildale/3511941], 240D? [Gosford/3511931], 324A [Furnace Creek/3611647], 326A [Panamint Butte/3611743], 334D [Visalia/3611933], 346D [Nevaras Peak/3611656], 356B [Wahtoke/3611964], 356C [Reedley/3611954], 357B? [Malaga/3611966], 358A? [Fresno South/3611967], 369A [East of Tin Mountain/3611783], 377C [Piedra/3611974], 378C? [Clovis/3611976], 379D? [Fresno North/3611977], 389D [Scottys Castle/3711713], 533B* [Clearlake Highlands/3812286], 533C* [Whispering Pines/3812276], 592C [Paradise West/3912176], 593A [Campbell Mound/3912187], 593D [Richardson Springs/3912177]

Many collections old; need field surveys. Records from Butte, Tehama, and Lake Counties may represent escapes from ornamental plantings. Threatened by development and agriculture. Mistakenly classified as a noxious weed in California from 1960 to 2004. See *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club* 13:26(1886) for original description.