

**Added to California Rare Plant Rank 1B.2 on August 17, 2011**

**Rare Plant Status Review: *Menodora spinescens* var. *mohavensis*  
Proposed New Add to Rank 1B.2, G4T2T3 / S2S3**

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July 5, 2011

**Background**

*Menodora spinescens* var. *mohavensis* is a deciduous shrub in the Oleaceae that is endemic to California's Mojave Desert. In many older floras (including *The Jepson Manual, First Edition*) it was included as a synonym of *Menodora spinescens*. It will be included in *The Jepson Manual, Second Edition* (available online at: <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/tjm2/review/treatments/oleaceae.html#61839>). It differs from *M. spinescens* var. *spinescens* in that it has a longer corolla (>7 mm as opposed to <5 mm) and larger calyx tube (>1.5 mm as opposed to <1.5 mm; *The Jepson Manual, Second Edition*). The plant is known to flower from April to May.

*The Jepson Manual, Second Edition* notes that *M. spinescens* var. *mohavensis* occurs on rocky hillsides and canyons in the Mojave Desert. Substrates often include andesite gravel (James Andre pers. comm. 2011). It is known in California between elevations of 690 and 2000 meters.

*Menodora spinescens* var. *mohavensis* is known from about 15 occurrences in the Mojave Desert. Fourteen of these are from San Bernardino County, with a disjunct historic occurrence in the Funeral Mountains in Inyo County. Most of the occurrences that have been confirmed in recent years have been found in the vicinity of Barstow, in the Ord, Rodman, and Newberry Mountains. A disjunct population near the northern entrance to Joshua Tree National Park was recently re-located by Tasha La Doux (James Andre pers comm. 2011). Its distant location from the Barstow populations may be due to the lack of botanical exploration on military lands (Fort Ord, China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, Twentynine Palms Base; Tim Chumley pers. comm. 2011).

Development of wind energy projects in the desert poses a larger threat than solar projects, as *M. spinescens* var. *mohavensis* tends to grow on rocky slopes and ridges, where wind turbines are more likely to be placed. ORV use could potentially damage populations of the plant, as the Stoddard Valley OHV Area is located near potential habitat for this species (Tim Chumley pers. comm. 2011).

**Recommended Actions**

CNPS: Add to CNPS 1B.2

CNDDDB: Add to CNDDDB G4T2T3 / S2S3

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**

*Menodora spinescens* A. Gray var. *mohavensis* Steyerm.

Mojave menodora

Rank 1B.2

San Bernardino, Inyo

Minneola (181D) 3411677, Ivanpah (225D) 3511533, Barstow (182A) 3411781, Queen Mtn. (102D) 3411611, Silver Bell Mine (155A) 3411665, Mud Hills (207D) 3511711, Camp Rock Mine (155B)? 3411666

Mojavean desert scrub; rocky hillsides, canyons, andesite gravel; elevation 690-2000 meters.

Deciduous shrub. Blooms Apr-May.

Known from fewer than twenty occurrences. Threatened by wind energy development. Potentially threatened by vehicles. Not in *The Jepson Manual* (1993). See *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 19:78-176 (1932) for original description.