

**Rare Plant Status Review: *Myrica hartwegii*
Proposed New Add to List 4.3**

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Background

Myrica hartwegii is a California endemic, deciduous shrub in the Myricaceae. It is included in the *Jepson Manual* (1993), the *Flora of North America* (Vol. 3) and the *Jepson Manual*, 2nd Edition (available online at <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/tjm2/review/treatments/myricaceae.html#34253>). Based on recent taxonomic treatments, *M. hartwegii* is the only member of its genus in California (*Myrica californica* is now treated as *Morella californica*). *M. hartwegii* is identified by its lack of terminal buds, leaf and floral characteristics, and its distinct aromatic fragrance. *M. hartwegii* flowers between May and June.

M. hartwegii grows in streamside, riparian habitats within cismontane woodland and lower montane coniferous forest from approximately 150 to 1700 meters in elevation.

M. hartwegii is known approximately 27 occurrences in the central to northern Sierra Nevada. *M. hartwegii* has been documented from El Dorado, Madera, Mariposa, and Tuolumne counties. Historical literature indicates that *M. hartwegii* occurs from Fresno to Yuba counties, but it is only documented from four counties within that range. Additionally, most of the occurrences of *M. hartwegii* are only documented by historical collections. Suitable habitat within and beyond the known range of *M. hartwegii* should be searched for additional occurrences. *M. hartwegii* is ranked as a G3G4, S3S4 taxon by NatureServe.

There are no known threats to occurrences of *M. hartwegii*. The population size, population trends, area of occupancy, and land ownership at occurrences of *M. hartwegii* are not well known. Information on the effects of dam construction and hydrological alteration on populations of *M. hartwegii* is needed to accurately assess its conservation status.

M. hartwegii may occur in large, scattered populations along long stretches of rivers where suitable habitat exists. Stebbins' 1979 report (not published) on *M. hartwegii* indicates that it occurs "scattered or abundant in dense stands" along approximately 30 miles of river or creek margin along the Consumnes River in El Dorado County. Elsewhere, (Botti 2001) indicates that it is, "restricted to the South Fork of the Merced River in the Wawona Campground" within Yosemite National Park and extends downstream intermittently to "about 1 kilometer west of Hite Cove" (a distance of at least 15 river miles).

M. hartwegii was included on the list of "very rare and endangered plants" in the 1st Edition (1974) of the CNPS Inventory. Stebbins 1979 report on *M. hartwegii* recommended that it "be removed from all lists of rare, threatened, endangered

or sensitive species.” Consequently, it was placed on the “plants considered but not included” list in the 2nd Edition (1980) of the CNPS Inventory and has remained on the “considered but rejected” list ever since. CNPS List 4 generally includes uncommon plants of limited distribution within California. Plants on this list are generally known from more than 50 occurrences. Even though *M. hartwegii* is known from fewer than 30 occurrences (many of which are historical), the abundant potential habitat within its range suggests that it is more common than the data indicates.

As an endemic plant of limited distribution, restricted to riparian habitats in the central and northern Sierra Nevada, CNPS and CNDDDB recommend that *M. hartwegii* be added to List 4.3.

Recommended Actions

CNPS: Add to CNPS List 4.3

CNDDDB: Add to CNDDDB as G3G4 / S3S4

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

Myrica hartwegii S. Watson

Sierra sweet bay

Myricaceae

List 4.3

El Dorado, Madera, Mariposa, Tuolumne

Riparian forest, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest. 150-1700 meters

Deciduous shrub. Blooms May-June.

See *Proceedings from the American Academy of Sciences* 10: 350 (1875) for original description.