

Rare Plant Status Review: *Platanthera yosemitensis*
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Background

Platanthera yosemitensis is a perennial herb in the Orchidaceae. It occurs in wet, dense montane meadow vegetation in the Yosemite National Park area. This species was just recently described by Alison Colwell, Charles Sheviak, and Peggy Moore in *Madrono* (*Madrono* 54(1): 86 (2007)). It is differentiated from similar orchids by its spur length and shape, bright yellow corolla, glaucous inflorescence, and unpleasant fragrance. When the *Madrono* article was published, there were 9 small populations of *P. yosemitensis* known. Four of these sites were observed to have fewer than 10 flowering individuals each. At the beginning of August, an additional population of several hundred individuals was confirmed by Alison Colwell. This population represents an extension of the range of the plant by about 10 miles. Possible threats to *P. yosemitensis* include meadow succession and human activities. Despite its non-showy flowers, there are some concerns about horticultural collecting by orchid enthusiasts.

It is also mentioned in this article that more populations of this species are likely to be found in unglaciated wet meadow sites in the central Sierra Nevada. Despite the high probability of more populations being found, this plant is currently endemic to the Yosemite National Park region with only a few populations and it seems prudent to place this species on CNPS List 1B until evidence becomes available to suggest that it is more widespread. *P. yosemitensis* requires review for inclusion in both the CNPS Inventory and the CNDDDB.

Recommended Actions

CNPS: Add to CNPS List 1B.2

CNDDDB: Add to CNDDDB as G2 / S2.2

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

Platanthera yosemitensis A. Colwell, C. Sheviak, and P. Moore
Orchidaceae

"Yosemite bog-orchid"

List 1B.2

Mariposa

437A [Half Dome/3711965], 437B [El Capitan/3711966]

Meadows and seeps / mesic, montane, granitic; elevation 2100-2285 meters.

Perennial herb, blooms July-August.

Possibly threatened by meadow succession, recreational activities, and horticultural collecting. Not in *The Jepson Manual* (1993). See *Madrono* 54(1): 86 (2007) for original description.