San Diego County Plant Atlas Project

Parabotanist's Guide for data operations on the web site

September 2008

There are four web pages in the Plant Atlas web site that allow Parabotanists to enter data and work with data that resides in the main Plant Atlas database. As a Parabotanist, you have permission, accessible by password, to enter new data, edit data that was entered earlier, list your data, and read and write to the Bulletin Board. You also have some tools to assist you, such as the Plant Name Finder, direct links to Google™ mapping, and Search the Database. These tools are accessible from the home page.

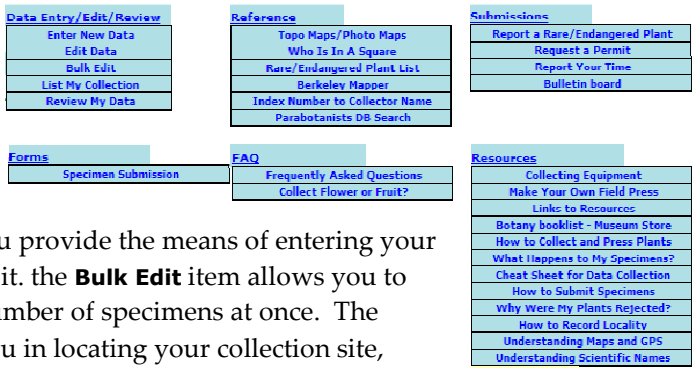
When you are working with the forms on the web pages, you are interacting with the Plant Atlas database. You are adding new data or editing existing data. On occasion, you may encounter an error resulting from some internal problem among the computers that are handling the data. Generally, the best advice is simply to try again. If you encounter a consistent problem, please report the problem and any error messages you may get to the Plant Atlas staff.

If you are a novice computer user, be assured that you can't do any harm to the database by making errors on these web pages. You can close any page at any time and start over again. The database will assure that you don't enter duplicate specimen numbers, that your longitude and latitude is consistent with the reported square, and other details.

To reach the data pages, you will be asked to log in. The log in will then enable you to go to any of the pages and to navigate from page to page without further logins. You should log out when your work is complete for the session, but you don't have to. You will be automatically logged out after 30 minutes of inactivity.

When you click the **Parabotanist LogIn** link from the Home Page, you will be directed to the page shown here. Enter your assigned initials and password into the text boxes and then click the button. You may then click on any of the links at the bottom of the page to go to that specific data page. Once on the data page, you may use the links on those pages to navigate among the data pages. Your login information will be retained. If you are inactive for over 30 minutes, you will be logged out. You will get no message to that effect, but when you use the data page you will be redirected back to this login page to log in again.

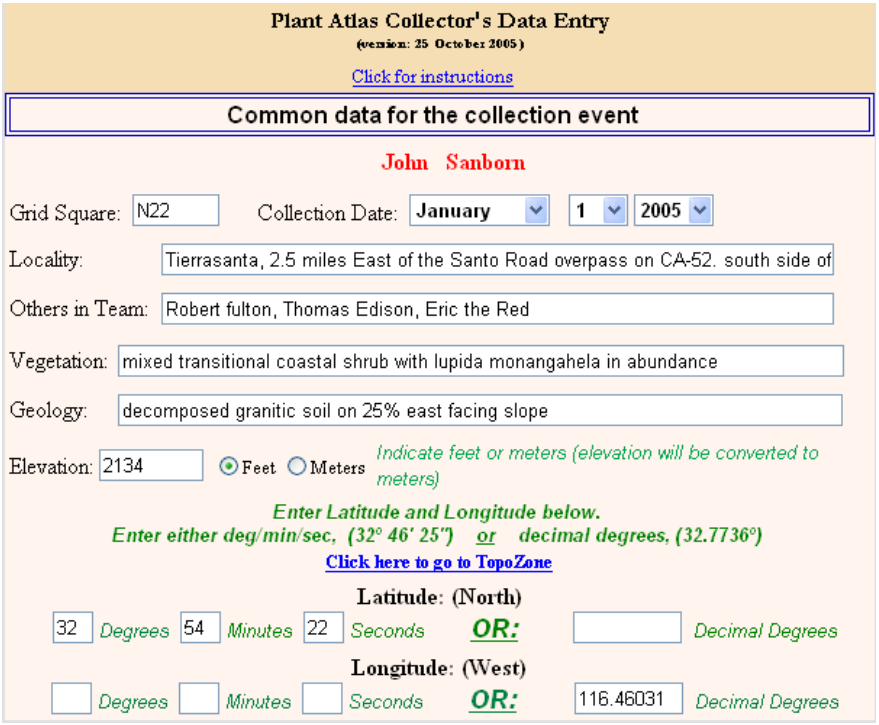
When you have successfully logged in, you will find a set of drop-down menus to use to navigate to the page you want for the work you want to do.



The drop-down menus, with all their options are shown here. The top three menus link you to the "active" items, those that allow you to work with the database and other support systems. The primary functions regarding data entry, data editing, and data review are found under the menu of that name. The tools on that menu provide the means of entering your collection data, after which you can edit it or review it. the **Bulk Edit** item allows you to edit certain items, such as collection locality, for a number of specimens at once. The **Reference** menu provides you with tools to assist you in locating your collection site, identifying other parabotanists, and detecting rare or endangered plants. The **Submissions** menu provides tools for communicating special items to the Plant Atlas staff and other parabotanists as well as reporting your time to the Volunteer department. The other menu items provide you with the information you need to successfully collect plants, keep accurate records, and make quality museum specimens.

Entering collection data:

The New Data entry form is set up in two sections. The top section holds information that is likely to be common for a collection event. When you add each specimen's data, this top section will remain with the data you entered for the first specimen so you don't have to enter it for each specimen. However, you can change it at any time for an individual specimen or group of specimens.



There are a number of conditions that are checked by the program as you enter data. If your data violates one of these conditions, an error message will appear as in the example below. When an error message appears, simply click OK and correct the problem before attempting the entry again.

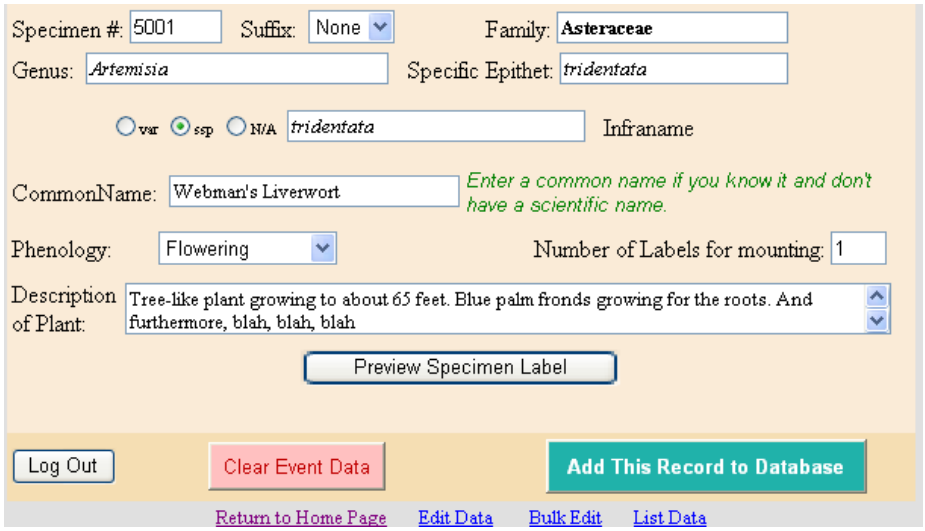
For example, if you enter a latitude or longitude that is not within the county, you'll see a message like this. You'll get messages like this if the square you entered does not match the latitude and longitude, and other entry errors. Your data stays on the screen when you get these messages, so all you have to do is correct the entry and try again.

Specific instructions for the Common Data for the Collection Event:

Entry	Instructions
Date	Enter the date you collected the specimen or specimens by selecting from the drop-down boxes
Atlas Square	Enter the Square. (example: A3, G14)
Locality	Describe the location with reference to roads, landmarks, natural features, etc. If on a slope, indicate which direction the slope faces. Describe the location well enough for another person to find it using these directions.
Others in Team	Enter name(s) of people who were with you
Vegetation	Enter the type of vegetation in the vicinity of the collecting area. Name specific plants if you like. Max size is 255 characters
Geology	Enter the soil type if you know it, and other details about the terrain in the vicinity of the collecting area. Max size is 255 characters.
Elevation	Enter the elevation if you know it. If you don't, leave the zero in the box. Click on either the **feet** or **meters** button to indicate the units your data is in. All elevations will be converted to meters in the database.
Latitude Longitude	Your latitude and longitude can be in either of two formats: **Degrees-Minutes-Seconds, for example 32° 46′ 25″** **Decimal degrees, for example 32.77361°** *Set your GPS unit to one of these two formats. You cannot enter other formats, such as degrees and decimal minutes, for example 32° 46.41′* Do not put a minus sign in the longitude. Enter your latitude and longitude in the three left boxes if it is in deg/min/sec format and in the single box on the right if it is in decimal degrees format. Your latitude and longitude will be checked to make sure the format is OK, that it is within the county, and that it is within the Atlas Square you entered. Error messages will appear for any of these problems, and you can then correct your lat/long. Use the menu item, **Plant Species on Google Maps**, on the Plant Atlas home page if you need help in determining the latitude and longitude, or to double-check what you read from your GPS unit.
That completes data entry for the collecting site. This data will remain as entered and will be entered with each specimen you enter in the session. However, you can change these entries at any time.	

Specific instructions for the Specimen Details data:

Each time you enter a specimen, these data entry boxes will be cleared. If you open the Name Finder to help you find or spell plant names, the Name Finder will open in a separate window that you can keep open, perhaps minimized, during the session. You can copy and paste from the Name Finder into the data entry text boxes.



Entry	Instructions
Specimen Number	**Required.** Enter the integer number you have assigned to the particular specimen in your collection. These must be integers. They must be unique (no duplicates) except that a number may be used more than once if you include a suffix in the following box. In this entry you may not include the suffix, that is, you cannot enter "27A" here.
Suffix	Enter a letter suffix chosen from the drop down box if you are using one. This is not required, and it is not encouraged. You may not duplicate a number/suffix combination – the database will not accept the duplicate. *Example of use: You may collect a specimen that is later determined to actually be two different plants. If your original number was 325, we may (or you may) split it into 325A and 325B.*
Family	If you know the plant family, enter it here.
Genus	If you know the plant genus, enter it here.
Species	If you know the species name, enter it here.
var. or ssp.	If you are going to enter an infraname, click on one of the buttons to indicate if it is a variety or subspecies.
Infraname	If you know the variety or subspecies name, enter it here.
Common Name	If you know the common name of the plant enter it here.
A note about names: Your specimens will be examined and identified by Dr. Jon Rebman or another qualified botanist. After this verification, the correct name for the plant will be written on the specimen label, and entered into the database. You will be able to review your collection by number and see the correct botanical name as well as an accepted common name if one is listed.	
Phenology	Select the proper status from the drop-down list. Phenology means reproductive status. You must make a selection.
Number of Labels	Enter your estimate of the number of sheets that will be required to mount the specimen. A label will be printed for each sheet, and your entry helps automate that process. Generally this is left as 1.
Description	Describe the plant, particularly characteristics that will be lost when mounted, such as height and breadth. Include colors of flowers or fruit that often fade when dried. 255 characters maximum.

To enter the specimen data into the database: Click the button:

Add This Record to Database

To help keep track of your entries, click the button:

Show My Last Five Entries

Show My Last 5 Entries

Number	Sfx	Year	Month	Day	Square	CommonName	Family	Genus
573		2003	September	21	Q23	Cup-Leaf Lilac	Rhamnaceae	Ceanothus
572		2003	September	21	Q23	Holly-Leaf Redberry	Rhamnaceae	Rhamnus
571		2003	September	21	Q23	Morning-Glory	Convolvulaceae	Calystegia
570		2003	September	21	Q23	Silk Tassel	Garryaceae	Garrya
569		2003	September	21	Q23	Pine Goldenbush	Asteraceae	Ericameria

To see what the specimen label will look like, you may preview the label any number of times as you enter data before you click the **Add This Record to Database** button. Click the button:

Preview Specimen Label

A preview version of the specimen label will appear on the screen. This preview will be cleared from the screen on data entry.

Preview Specimen Label

San Diego Natural History Museum

Voucher for San Diego County Plant Atlas

Asteraceae

Pinus agrifolia var. withstandia

San Diego County, California. Mission Trails Park: On the east side of the river bank under the footbridge along the walking path westward from the Padre Dam. 32.9658° N., 117.2345° W., Elev 257m . Vegetation: Hogweed and skunk cabbage mixed with cattails and other typical streambed water plants. Geology: Granitic feldspar with sand and gravel and fine silt mud.

Annual; herbaceous small shrub about 6" tall, with yellow flowers on single stalks from the base. Each flower has a heart-shaped green stamen and sixteen petals. This plant was obviously collected and documented by a botanical dummy who just does web pages.

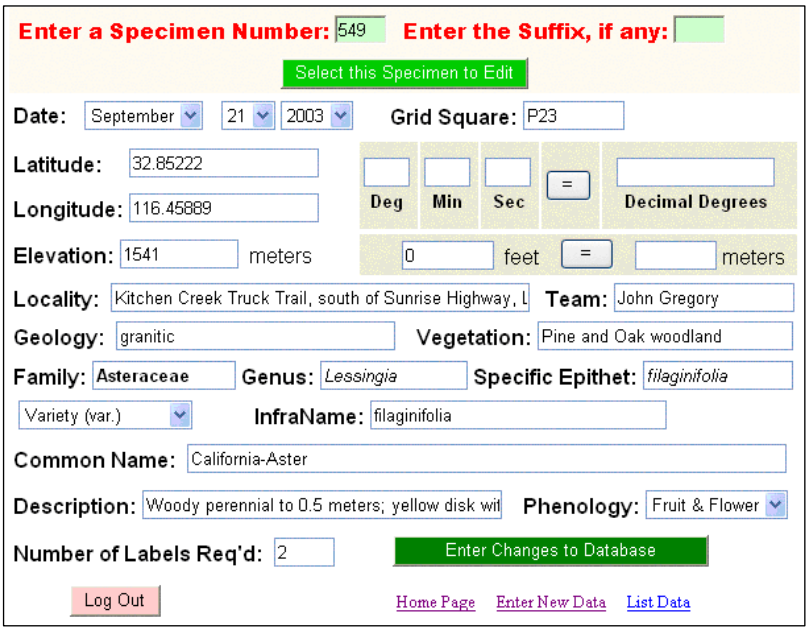
John Sanborn 567 Square: A99 27 March 1997

With: Popeye, Bluto, and Ms. Oyl

Elevation, Latitude, and Longitude are dummy values for review only

Editing collection data:

To edit an existing record, use the **Edit Data** menu item; the form to the right will appear. When you enter a collection number, with suffix if the specimen has one, and click the Select This Specimen to Edit button. the screen will display the complete data set for that specimen. You can change any of the displayed items, and when you click the Enter Changes to Database button, those changes will be made.



Entry	Instructions
Specimen Number And Suffix	Enter the specimen number whose data you wish to edit. Then click on the button: Select This Specimen To Edit The data for that specimen will appear in the text boxes on the page.
Note: If your specimen has already been identified/verified you will get a message telling you that you cannot edit the data for that specimen.	
Edit the Data	Change any of the data.
Lat/Long and Elevation	Note that Lat/Long is in decimal degrees. Any changes must be made in decimal degrees. If your data is in Deg/Min/Sec, use the calculator on the page to convert it. Enter the Deg/Min/Sec into the three boxes and click the = sign button. The decimal data will appear to the right and you can enter that into Latitude or Longitude boxes. Elevation is in meters. Take the same approach.
To make the changes, click the button: **Enter Changes to Database**	

Bulk Editing collection data:

The bulk data edit form allows you to change the data entries for a group of specimens at one time, without having to call them up individually as you do on the edit page. You can edit or delete data for those items in the Common Data area.

To use the form, enter the first and last specimen number in the text boxes at the top of the form for those specimens whose data you want to change. The changes will be made to the first, last, and all in between those numbers.

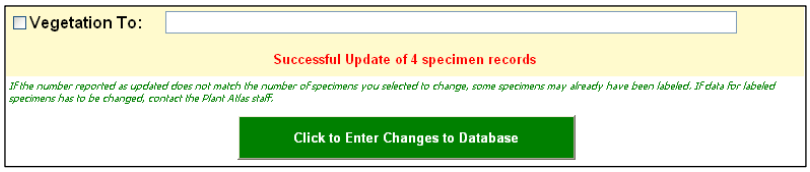
Data will be changed only for those items where the

check box to the left is checked. If you do not check the box, the data will not be changed even if you have entered something into the data text area. If a box is checked, and the data text field is left empty, the data for that item in the database will be deleted. In the example above, the entry for Team will be deleted from the database for specimens 1001 through 1005.

Use the latitude/longitude and elevation converters exactly as used on the Edit Data page.

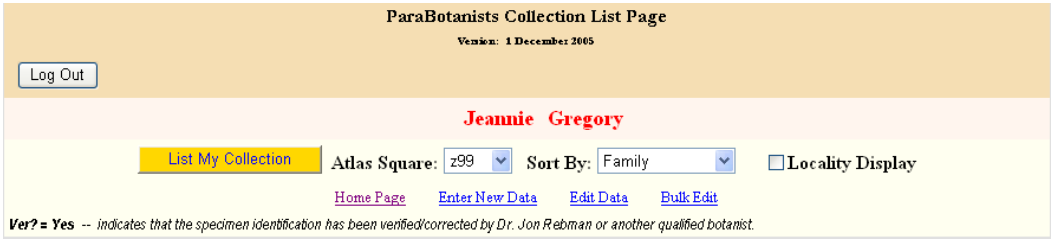
When you are ready to make the change, click the green button at the bottom of the page.

If the operation is successful, a message will appear indicating the number of records that were updated. In the example above, only four records were updated even though it would appear that five records were selected. One of these records has already been labeled and therefore cannot be changed. A similar result may occur if there were missing numbers in the sequence. Your specimen numbers do not have to be sequential and complete. This process will affect whatever number of records exist between the numbers you specify in the boxes.



If the operation fails, an error message will appear on the form. The data you have entered will remain on the screen, and you can click the button again or correct the problem as indicated.

List your collection data:



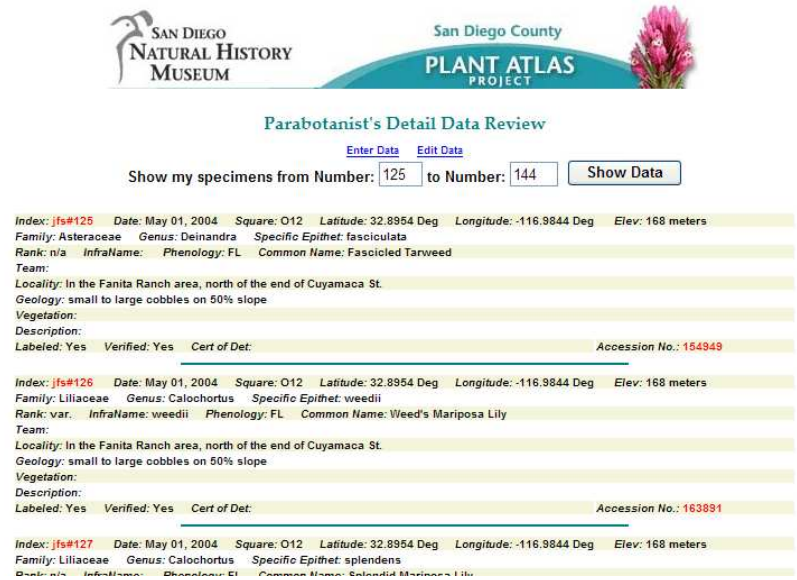
You can see all of your collection on this page. The drop-down list of Atlas Squares will list only those Squares from which you have collected plants. Select a Square and then click the button: **List My Collection** You may select **{ALL}** from the dropdown Atlas Square list to view your entire collection. Select a sort field you would like to sort your listing by. If sorting by date, the list will not be sorted exactly correctly.

Your list will appear as follows:

Date	Family	Genus	Species	Rank	InfraName	Common Name	Num.	Sfx	Ver?
01 Aug 04 [D15]	Asteraceae	Ericameria	pinifolia			Pine Goldenbush	1092		Yes
01 Aug 04 [D15]	Lamiaceae	Monardella	lanceolata	var.	lanceolata	Mustang Mint	1093		Yes
01 Aug 04 [E15]	Bignoniaceae	Catalpa	speciosa			Northern Catalpa	1094		Yes
01 Aug 04 [E15]	Polygonaceae	Eriogonum	nudum	ssp.	pauciflorum	Pine Buckwheat	1095		Yes
01 Aug 04 [E18]	Asteraceae	Lessingia	filaginifolia	var.	filaginifolia	California-Aster	1090		Yes
01 Aug 04 [E18]	Asteraceae	Lessingia	glandulifera	var.	glandulifera	Valley Lessingia	1088		Yes
01 Aug 04 [E18]	Polemoniaceae	Eriastrum					1087		No
01 Aug 04 [E18]	Polygonaceae	Eriogonum	wrightii	var.	membranaceum	Foothill Buckwheat	1089		Yes
01 Aug 04 [E19]	Nyctaginaceae	Boerhavia	coccinea			Red Ringstem, Scarlet Spiderling	1091		Yes

To assist parabotanists in good practice in entering Locality data, the **Locality Display** checkbox, if checked, will result in a different data set that includes the Locality field. The Locality display cannot be used with the {ALL} selection.

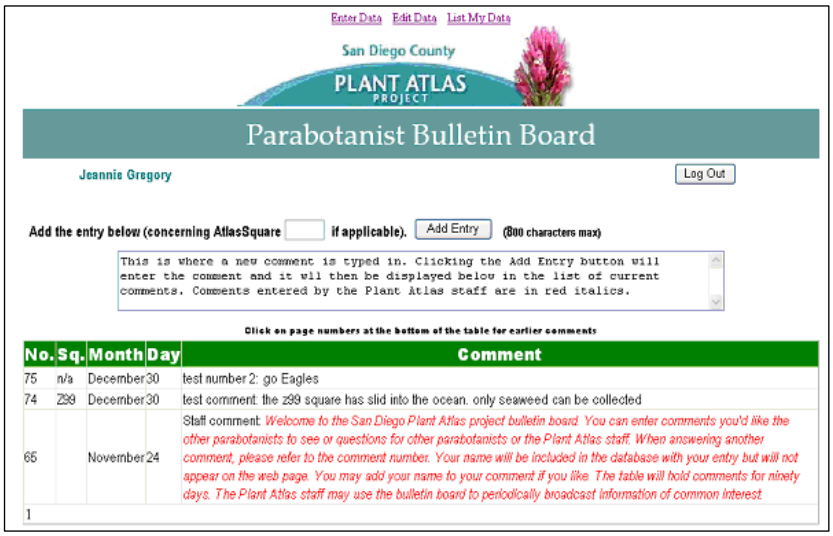
To provide a parabotanist with a view of the complete data record for each specimen, another more compact display is provided at the menu item **Review My Data**. This display does not permit editing.



Bulletin Board:

The Bulletin board provides an opportunity for Parabotanists to post messages that may be of general value to the Plant Atlas community. If you have a question, and you think the answer should be shared with other Parabotanists, post it on the Bulletin Board. The Plant Atlas staff can enter responses directly to the question.

Your name will be recorded with any comment you enter but will not appear in the comment that other Parabotanists will see. If you want to "sign" the comment, add your name to the comment body. Staff comments will appear in red italics.

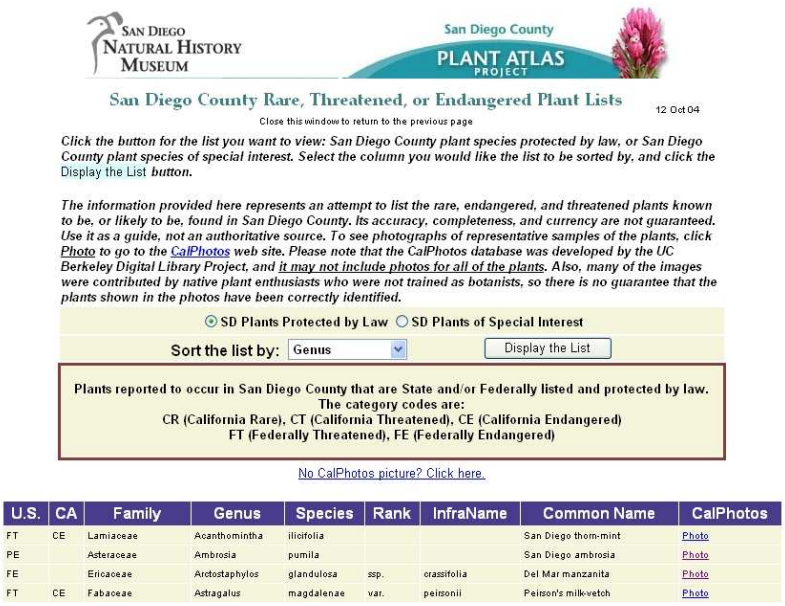


No.	Sq.	Month	Day	Comment
75	n/a	December	30	test number 2: go Eagles
74	289	December	30	test comment: the z89 square has slid into the ocean. only seaweed can be collected
65		November	24	Staff comment: *Welcome to the San Diego Plant Atlas project bulletin board. You can enter comments you'd like the other parabotanists to see or questions for other parabotanists or the Plant Atlas staff. When answering another comment, please refer to the comment number. Your name will be included in the database with your entry but will not appear on the web page. You may add your name to your comment if you like. The table will hold comments for ninety days. The Plant Atlas staff may use the bulletin board to periodically broadcast information of common interest.*

1

Rare, Threatened, Endangered (Special Status) Plants:

On the login page, there are two links related to the subject of rare, threatened, endangered plants. The first link takes you to a page that facilitates the finding of special status plants by name and provides details of the status. You can, by selecting the appropriate button, display plants that are categorized by California or Federal law, or plants that are simply considered Special Status by the California Native Plant Society.


San Diego Natural History Museum

San Diego County PLANT ATLAS PROJECT

San Diego County Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Plant Lists

12 Oct 04

Close this window to return to the previous page

Click the button for the list you want to view: San Diego County plant species protected by law, or San Diego County plant species of special interest. Select the column you would like the list to be sorted by, and click the Display the List *button.*

The information provided here represents an attempt to list the rare, endangered, and threatened plants known to be, or likely to be, found in San Diego County. Its accuracy, completeness, and currency are not guaranteed. Use it as a guide, not an authoritative source. To see photographs of representative samples of the plants, click Photo to go to the CalPhotos web site. Please note that the CalPhotos database was developed by the UC Berkeley Digital Library Project, and it may not include photos for all of the plants. Also, many of the images were contributed by native plant enthusiasts who were not trained as botanists, so there is no guarantee that the plants shown in the photos have been correctly identified.

SD Plants Protected by Law | SD Plants of Special Interest

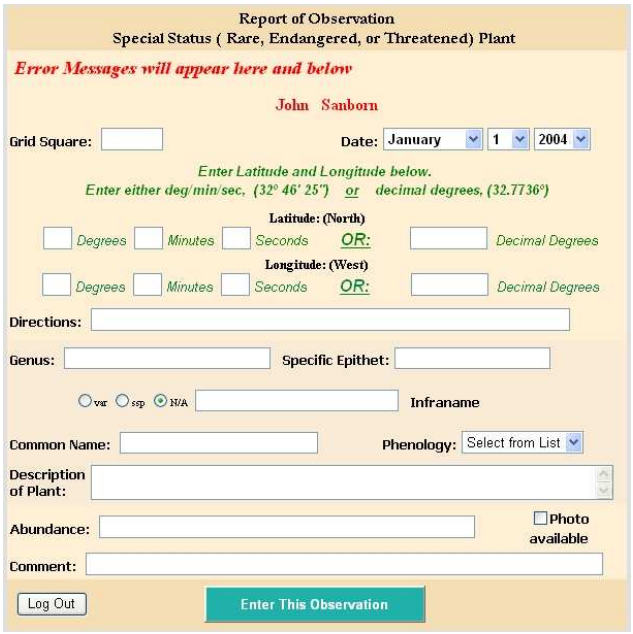
Sort the list by: Genus — Display the List

Plants reported to occur in San Diego County that are State and/or Federally listed and protected by law.
The category codes are:
CR (California Rare), CT (California Threatened), CE (California Endangered)
FT (Federally Threatened), FE (Federally Endangered)

No CalPhotos picture? Click here.

U.S.	CA	Family	Genus	Species	Rank	InfraName	Common Name	CalPhotos
FT	CE	Lamiaceae	Acanthomintha	ilicifolia			San Diego thorn-mint	Photo
PE		Asteraceae	Ambrosia	pumila			San Diego ambrosia	Photo
FE		Ericaceae	Arctostaphylos	glandulosa	ssp.	crassifolia	Del Mar manzanita	Photo
FT	CE	Fabaceae	Astragalus	magdalenae	var.	peirsonii	Peirson's milk-vetch	Photo

If you encounter a plant that is protected by California and/or Federal law, you should report the observation, but not collect the plant. The link to the observation report form will take you to that page.


Report of Observation
Special Status (Rare, Endangered, or Threatened) Plant

Error Messages will appear here and below

John Sanborn

Grid Square: Date: January 1 2004

Enter Latitude and Longitude below.
Enter either deg/min/sec, (32° 46' 25") or decimal degrees, (32.7736°)

Latitude: (North)
Degrees Minutes Seconds OR: Decimal Degrees

Longitude: (West)
Degrees Minutes Seconds OR: Decimal Degrees

Directions:

Genus: Specific Epithet:

var ssp N/A Infraname

Common Name: Phenology: Select from List

Description of Plant:

Abundance: Photo available

Comment:

Log Out — Enter This Observation

Topographic overview map/Aerial Images:

The best aids to determining the latitude and longitude of your collecting site and ensuring you're in the square you believe you're in, are the two Google™ tools accessible from the home page. Both provide latitude/longitude display as well as Atlas Square references. See the Plant Species on Google Maps under the Plant Mapping menu, and Plant Atlas on Google Earth under the references menu.

For a quick aerial photo of any particular square, the web site provides a set of aerial images. After logging in, use the drop-down menu item **Reference** and then click on **Topo Maps/Photo Maps**.
You will see the following page:

The left side of the page illustrates the overview map that will be made available. There are two links to access these maps. One leads to the maps produced in Adobe® pdf format, the other to maps produced in .jpg pictorial file format. The maps are the same either way, and the narrative on the page explains why you might pick one format over the other.

The right side of the page allows you to select an aerial image of any particular square. Use the drop-down boxes to select the square, and then click the Show Image button.