

# Appendix R

## Plant Rankings





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## R. PLANT RANKINGS

### R.1 CNPS and CRPR Rankings

In all the HCP/NCCP drafts prior to 2011, MRC referred to the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) plant rankings. In 2010, however, CDFG changed the name of the “CNPS List” or “CNPS Ranks” to the “California Rare Plant Rank” (CRPR) in its publications: A CNDDDB Newsletter (September 2010)<sup>1</sup> explains the reason for the change:

This was done to reduce confusion over the fact that currently the Rare Plant Status Review groups (300+ botanical experts from government, academia, NGOs and the private sector) produce the rank assignments for rare plants and that both DFG and CNPS jointly manage this collaborative effort. The old name gave the false impression that CNPS solely assigned the ranks and therefore had excessive influence on the regulatory process. We made this name change in consultation and agreement with the CNPS Executive Director and the CNPS Board of Directors. Nothing about the actual process of rare plant review or rank assignment has changed and the same committee of experts from many organizations (including DFG and CNPS) still reviews each change and ultimately assign the ranks.

The California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) recognizes 5 different levels of plant rarity, as shown in Table R-1.

**Table R-1 CRPR Levels of Rarity**

Level	Description
1A	Presumed extinct in California
1B	Rare or endangered in California and elsewhere
2	Rare or endangered in California but more common elsewhere
3	More information needed—review list
4	Plants of limited distribution—watch list

In 2005, CNPS modified their R-E-D Code, which contained information on rarity, endangerment, and distribution. The CNPS inventory retains the information in the R-E-D Code with the following modifications:

- A new threat code extension replaces the E value from the R-E-D Code. To parallel information in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), the lower the threat code number, the higher the threat level. The new Treat Code extensions are:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Seriously endangered in California. |
| 2 | Fairly endangered in California.    |
| 3 | Not very endangered in California.  |

All plants that are level 1A and some level 3 plants lacking any threat information receive no threat code extension. Also, these threat code guidelines represent a starting point in the assessment of threat level. CNPS considers other factors, such as habitat vulnerability, in setting the threat code.

- Inventory entries for those taxa that only occur in California display “CA Endemic.”

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/pdfs/CNDDDB\\_News\\_Sep\\_2010.pdf](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/pdfs/CNDDDB_News_Sep_2010.pdf) (accessed 15 April 2011)

- The state rank (S-rank) of the CNDDDB now displays as the R (rarity) value of the former R-E-D Code.
- The global rank (G-rank) of the CNDDDB displays for out-of-state distribution.

## R.2 CNDDDB Rankings

The global and state rankings cited here are taken from a recent publication (April 2011) of CDFG.<sup>2</sup> The rankings reflect a plant's overall condition throughout its global range in number of individual plants or acres.

**Table R-2 CNDDDB Global Rankings**

Level	Description
G1	Critically imperiled—at very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer populations), very steep declines, or other factors
G2	Imperiled—at high risk of extinction due to very restricted range, very few populations (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors
G3	Vulnerable —at moderate risk of extinction due to a restricted range, relatively few populations (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors
G4	Apparently secure —uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors
G5	Secure —common; widespread and abundant

A state ranking (S1 through S5) is similar to the global ranking, but state ranks refer to the imperilment status only within California's state boundaries.

**Table R-3 State Rankings**

Level	Description
S1	Critically imperiled—critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer occurrences) or because of some factor(s) such as very steep declines making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state/province
S2	Imperiled—imperiled in the state because of rarity due to very restricted range, very few populations (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the nation or state/province
S3	Vulnerable—vulnerable in the state due to a restricted range, relatively few populations (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation.
S4	Apparently secure—uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.
S5	Secure—common, widespread, and abundant in the state.

<sup>2</sup> California Department of Fish and Game, Natural Diversity Database. April 2011. Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List. Quarterly publication. 71 pp.  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/pdfs/SPPlants.pdf> (accessed 15 April 2011)

Subspecies have a T-rank attached to the G-rank. The G-rank reflects the condition of the entire species, while the T-rank reflects the condition of the subspecies.

Other symbols include:

?	Uncertainty
S2S3	The rank is somewhere between S2 and S3.
GH	All sites are historical; the element has not been seen for 20+ years, but suitable habitat still exists.
GX	All sites are extirpated; the element is extinct in the wild.
GXC	Extinct in the wild; exists in cultivation.
G1Q	The element is very rare; there are taxonomic questions.

