

California Jewelflower (*Caulanthus californicus*)

Status -- Federal: Endangered; California: Endangered



Photo: Moose Peterson/WRP

The California jewelflower is an annual plant belonging to the mustard family.

As is typical of annuals, both plant size and population size in this species can vary dramatically, depending on site and weather conditions.

The plant stems are hairless and often branching.

The upper leaves are egg-shaped and clasp the stem, unlike the leaves at the base of the plant, which are oblong.

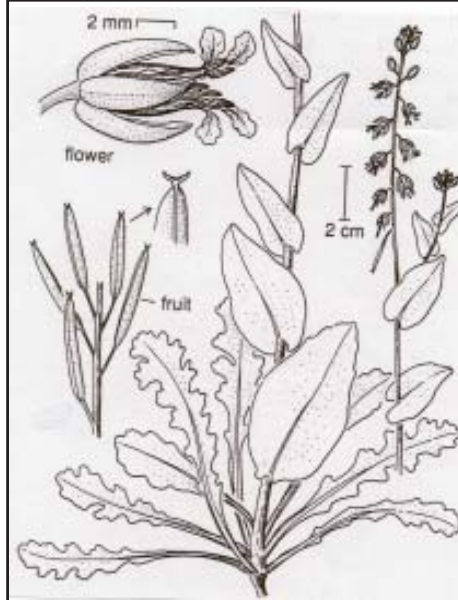
The maroon buds are clustered at the tip of the stem and contrast with the translucent, white flowers below. The California jewelflower has elongated fruits that are

flattened in cross-section. Seeds of California jewelflower begin to germinate in the fall when the rainy season begins, but additional seedlings may continue to emerge for several months.

California Department of Pesticide Regulation
Endangered Species Program
<https://www.cdpr.ca.gov>



California Jewelflower



The seedlings develop into rosettes (clusters of leaves at ground level) during the winter months, and the stem elongates as flower buds begin to appear in February or March.

Flowering and seed set continue until the plants die, which may occur as late as May in years of favorable rainfall and temperatures. The flowers are pollinated by insects.

Habitats

Most sites where California jewelflower is found have dense herbaceous cover. On the Carrizo Plain, this plant occurs primarily on the burrow systems of giant

kangaroo rats (*Dipodomys ingens*), another endangered species. California jewelflower has been reported from elevations ranging from approximately 250 to 3,000 feet, and from level terrain to 25% slopes. Primary soil types at known sites are subalkaline, sandy loams.

Distribution

Today, known populations of California jewelflower are confined to three areas in hilly terrain west of the San Joaquin Valley: the Carrizo Plain, Santa Barbara Canyon (adjacent to the Cuyama Valley in Santa Barbara County), and the Kreyenhagen Hills (Fresno County). Additional populations of California jewelflower may persist in the foothills of Fresno, Kern, and Kings counties, where potential habitat remains in private rangeland.