



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Sacramento Fish & Wildlife Office



Species Account  
SONOMA ALOPECURUS

*Alopecurus aequalis* var. *sonomensis*

CLASSIFICATION: Endangered

Federal Register Notice 62-54791; October 22, 1997

[http://ecos.fws.gov/docs/federal\\_register/fr3169.pdf](http://ecos.fws.gov/docs/federal_register/fr3169.pdf)

(1.6 MB)

STATE LISTING STATUS AND CNPS CODE:

The California Native Plant Society has placed the species on List 1B (rare or endangered throughout its range). It has not been officially listed by the State of California.

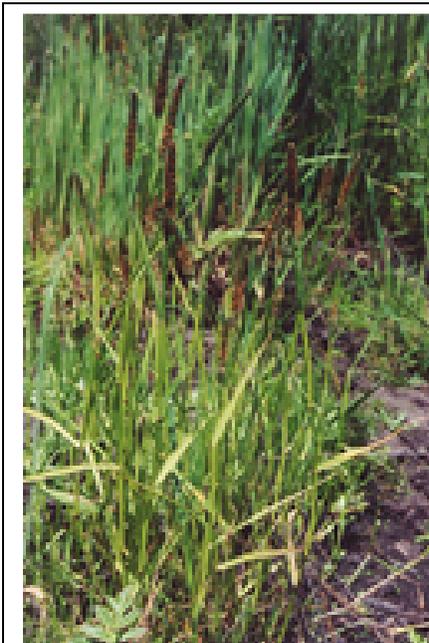
CRITICAL HABITAT: None

RECOVERY PLAN: None

5-YEAR REVIEW: Initiated March 25, 2009



Sonoma Alopecurus  
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Sonoma Alopecurus  
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DESCRIPTION:

Sonoma alopecurus is a tufted, perennial member of the grass family (Poaceae). It is a variety of shortawn foxtail (*Alopecurus aequalis*), and it has the alternate name of Sonoma shortawn foxtail.

The plant reaches 12 to 30 inches in height. Leaf blades are up to 0.3 inch wide and the stems are mostly straight or weakly bent near the base. Spikelets are usually violet-gray near the tip. The awn (bristle-like part) is straight, and exceeds the lemma (the bracts that enclose the awn) by 0.04 to 0.1 inch.

Flowers bloom from May to July. Panicles (branching flower clusters) are 1 to 3.5 inches long and 0.1 to 0.3 inch wide.

Sonoma alopecurus may be difficult to distinguish from other varieties of the species. It is distinguished from *Alopecurus aequalis* var. *aequalis* by the violet-gray spikes, more upright appearance and generally wider panicle. See Jepson Manual, below, for a detailed description of the species *Alopecurus aequalis*.

## DISTRIBUTION:

Sonoma alopecurus is found in moist soils in freshwater marshes in Sonoma and Marin counties. Eleven populations of the species have been extirpated. Eight natural are currently believed to remain. Three are on private property in Sonoma County, five at Point Reyes National Seashore in Marin County, including one on private land within the Seashore.

U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 Minute Quads: Bolinas (467B) 3712286, Drakes Bay (485C) 3812218, Inverness (485D) 3812217, Kenwood (501A) 3812245, Sebastopol (502A) 3812247, Camp Meeker (502B) 3812248, Two Rock (502D) 3812237, Duncans Mills (503A) 3812341

## THREATS:

This species is declining due to loss of wetland habitat, competition from nonnative plant species, trampling and grazing by cattle and low reproductive success. Attempts to reintroduce the species in the National Seashore have failed.

## REFERENCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

### [General references about California plants](#)

[www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/plant\\_spp\\_accts/plant\\_references.htm](http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/plant_spp_accts/plant_references.htm)

[The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California](#). This is the standard reference about California plants. The Manual is available in an [online version](#). See also the [Jepson Online Interchange](#) for updates.

For larger images and permission information see CalPhotos <http://calphotos.berkeley.edu/>.

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