



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Sacramento Fish & Wildlife Office
Species Account
BAKERSFIELD CACTUS
Opuntia treleasei



CLASSIFICATION: Endangered
Federal Register Notice 55:29361; July 19, 1990
http://ecos.fws.gov/docs/federal_register/fr1729.pdf
(3.5 MB)

STATE LISTING STATUS AND CNPS CODE:
This species was listed as endangered by the California Department of Fish and Game in January 1990. The California Native Plant Society has placed it on List 1B (rare or endangered throughout its range).

CRITICAL HABITAT: None designated

RECOVERY PLAN: Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley, California 1998
http://ecos.fws.gov/docs/recovery_plan/980930a.pdf

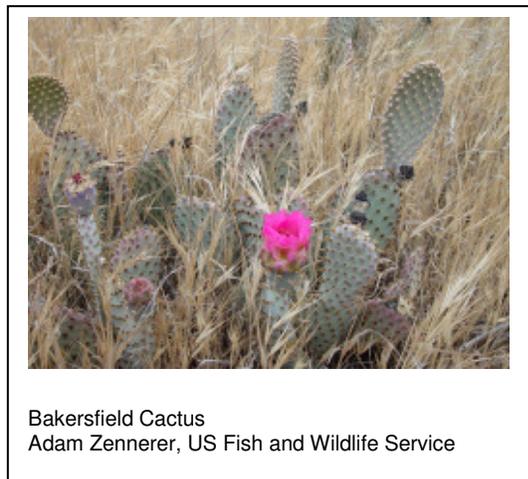
5-YEAR REVIEW: Initiated March 22, 2006
http://ecos.fws.gov/docs/federal_register/fr5047.pdf
(73 KB)

DESCRIPTION:

Bakersfield cactus is a perennial low growing cactus (Cactaceae). It typically spreads to form extensive thickets. It generally forms fleshy, flattened green beavertail-like pads (flattened stems) up to about 18 cm long by 1 to 1.5 cm thick. (7 inches by 1/2 in.) They have small, sharp bristles but not spines. Flowers are magenta. They usually appear in May.



Bakersfield Cactus
Adam Zennerer, US Fish and Wildlife Service



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Habitat: Sandy soil in the grasslands of Kern County. Plants spread to thickets as wide as 10 meters. (33 ft)

Reproduction has not been studied much. The flowers do produce seeds. But most new plants probably don't start that way. Usually, pads fall off and take root, becoming new plants.

See Hickman (1993) in General Information about California Plants, below, for a detailed description of the species.

DISTRIBUTION:

Soils supporting Bakersfield cactus typically are sandy, although gravel, cobbles or boulders also may be present. The species occurs on flood plains, ridges, bluffs and rolling hills in saltbush scrub plant communities, and occasionally in blue oak woodland or riparian woodland at elevations from 460 to 1,800 feet.

Distribution is restricted to a limited area of central Kern County near Bakersfield. Once extensive colonies existed around Bakersfield, along the bluffs of the Kern River, along the Caliente Creek drainage and nearby foothills of the Tehachapi Mountains, and south to the Tejon Hills. Current distribution is fragmented and much reduced. Approximately one-third of the historical occurrences of Bakersfield cactus have been extirpated and the remaining populations are highly fragmented.



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U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 Minute Quads: Arvin (214A) 3511827, Weed Patch (214B) 3511828, Mettler (214C) 3511818, Tejon Hills (214D) 3511817, Coal Oil Canyon (215D) 3511911, Mount Adelaide (238B) 3511846, Bena (238C) 3511836, Oiler Peak (238D)* 3511835, Rio Bravo Ranch (239A) 3511847, Oil Center (239B) 3511848, Lamont (239C)* 3511838, Edison (239D) 3511837, Oildale (240A)* 3511941, North Of Oildale (263D) 3511951 (* Presumed extirpated)

THREATS:

Residential development. Agriculture, flooding, pesticides, off-road vehicles, sand and gravel mining, oil and gas drilling, and competition from nonnative annual grasses.

REFERENCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

We have a species account designed for 4-6th grade students.

http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/plant_spp_accts/bakersfield_cactus_kf.htm

[General references about California plants](#)

www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/plant_spp_accts/plant_references.htm

For more pictures, see CalPhotos <http://calphotos.berkeley.edu/>.

Upland Plants of the San Joaquin Valley

Loss and degradation of natural communities due to agriculture, urbanization, livestock grazing, water impoundment and diversion, historical predator and pest control, and other human activities have jeopardized nearly all the unique biota of the San Joaquin Valley below the woodland belts, and are the major causes of endangerment of the state and federally listed species.

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Last updated DATE