



The Coastal Prairie of Point Molate

The coastal prairie of Point Molate is one of the most diverse ecosystems in the East Bay area. Current estimates indicate that 95% of coastal prairie ecosystems in California have been developed for, or impacted by agriculture and construction. We are fortunate to have a these remnant prairie sites in the East Bay, courtesy of the former US Navy Pt. Molate Depot.

Coastal prairies occupy a distinct ecological setting, inland from sandy beaches and vegetation on the seaside cliffs. Coastal prairies are unique vegetation communities because they are characterized by a mix of perennial grasses, annual grasses, sedges, and forbs.

Many of the coastal prairie species are geographically restricted and occur only in coastal areas exposed to salty sea spray and high

winds. Point Molate's exposed terraces overlooking the bay provide suitable habitat for coastal prairie species, while remaining inhospitable to trees and shrubs.

Due to these unusual environmental conditions, research has shown that coastal prairies have twice the number of plant species of any other prairie community, averaging around 22 species per meter. Although



there are a large number of non-native plants that invade coastal prairies, a large percentage of these species are natives, and some which are rare and endangered.

Coastal prairies are often seen in a matrix along the coast with other vegetation communities including Northern coastal scrub, coastal strand, live oak forest, maritime chaparral, and redwood forest. Often, ecotones, or transition areas between two community/ecosystem types occurs on prairie edges creating an even more unique community of plants that share the same ecological microhabitats.

Coastal prairies are invaluable plant communities that need to be preserved. Please lend a hand in helping preserve, conserve, and restore our California coastal prairies by educating others about the beauty and value of native coastal prairies.

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Natives of the Coastal Prairie



Oatgrass

Perennial Grasses (Bunch grasses)

California Oatgrass (*Danthonia californica*)
Purple Needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*)
Molate Fescue (*Festuca rubra* Molate)*
California Brome (*Bromus carinatus*)
Tufted Hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*)

Forbs and Shrubs

Plantain (*Plantago erecta*)
Sun cups (*Camissonia ovata*)
Checkerbloom (*Sidelcia malvaeflora*)
California Buttercup (*Ranunculus californicus*)
Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*)
Sticky Sand Spurrey (*Spergularia macrotheca* var. *macrotheca*)*
Gumweed (*Madia exigua*)
Yellow Pansy (*Viola pedunculata*)
California Acaena (*Acaena pinnatifida californica*)
Tiburon Buckwheat (*Eriogonum luteolum* var. *caninum*) *
Coast Delphinium (*Delphinium decorum*)
Coyote Brush (*Baccharis pilularis*)
Clover (*Trifolium* sp.) *
Spineflower (*Chorizanthe* sp.) *
Limnanthes (*Limnanthes* sp.) *



Red Fescue



Purple Needlegrass

Sedges

Brownhead rush (*Juncus phaeocephalus*)
Toad rush (*Juncus bufonius*)
Coast carex (*Carex obnupta*)

* - indicates a rare, endangered, or special status species

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