

2020 Progress Report for Maria Jesus

I am happy to report that I was able to make considerable progress on my floristic research in the southern Inyo Mountains despite several unforeseen disruptions. Like many others, I made the difficult decision to postpone my spring field research in accordance with California's "stay-at-home" order. Thankfully, the blooms persisted at the higher elevations of Malpais Mesa and Conglomerate Mesa through the end of May when I was able to make my first collecting trip of 2020. Throughout the field season, I documented several new occurrences of CNPS-ranked taxa including *Astragalus inyoensis*, *Eremothera boothii* subsp. *alyssoides*, *Ericameria nana*, *Eriogonum mensicola*, *Hecastocleis shockleyi*, *Nemacladus inyoensis*, *Oxytheca watsonii*, *Perityle inyoensis*, and *Sclerocactus polyancistrus*. In total, I made five collecting trips and have plans to thoroughly collect in the low to mid-elevations during spring 2021.

Given the pandemic-related restrictions and other delays (e.g. Keeler earthquake, washed-out road, blown head-gasket), I shifted some of my efforts towards public outreach and herbarium work. I wrote several articles, including one that appeared in CNPS's *Flora*, and gave five online webinars which collectively reached over 300 viewers. I completed 99% of my species determinations and observed that CNPS-ranked taxa comprise nearly 9% of the flora of the southern Inyo Mountains! Additionally, I reviewed many historical herbarium specimens and observations. Preliminary results indicate nearly 50 species may be added to the Inyo Mountain vascular plant checklist that was first compiled by Mary DeDecker.

****Note: Funds were not fully expended in 2020 and will be applied to 2021 field work following the budget outlined in the 2020 DeDecker Grant proposal.*

