



Figure 1: Picture of Fern Lake.

I am Rachel Tageant a third-year master's student at the California Botanic Garden conducting a floristic inventory of the Owens River Headwater Area (ORHA) in the central-eastern Sierra Nevada. My study area is approximately 52 mi<sup>2</sup> and includes the Owens River Headwater designated wilderness area in the Inyo National Forest. Located along the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada crest, approximately 12 miles northwest of Mammoth Lakes in Mono County. This unique area is located near a transition zone between the California Floristic Province and the Great Basin Floristic Province. The elevational range of the OHRA is 7,200 - 11,520 ft and is characterized by pumice pebble flats, volcanic outcrops, forested mountain slopes, high-elevation meadows, lakes, and alpine summits. The primary goal of my master's research is to conduct a comprehensive floristic inventory of the ORHA and surrounding areas by collecting herbarium specimens, compiling an annotated species checklist, and characterizing the vegetation types in each habitat.

The 2024 field season was great and productive. In 2024, I was able to find the *Carex petasata* (Liddon's sedge) 2B.3 in Glass Creek Meadow, the clustered-flowered cryptantha *Cryptantha glomeriflora* 4.3, Sweetwater Mountain Milkvetch *Astragalus kentrophyta* var. *danaus* 4.3, Northern Limestone Buckwheat *Eriogonum microthecum* var. *alpinum* 4.3, and Pinzl's Rockcress *Boechera pinzliae* 1B.3.

Currently, I am finishing up my master's, keying all of the vouchered collections, and writing my thesis, and I am anticipating graduating in May. Although I only have preliminary

results, I have presented my research to CNPS Orange County, Southern California Botanists Symposium, Northern California Botanists Symposium, and more presentations to local college and high school classes. This upcoming April I will be presenting my research at the annual Wildflower Exhibit at the Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest. If any opportunity arises, I would be happy to present my research or give a poster presentation to CNPS Bristlecone.

I am very grateful to have received the Mary DeDecker Botanical Grant, which helped fund the cost of travel to and from my study area and aided in the purchase of the necessary equipment I needed for my research. Thank you for your generosity, and I look forward to sharing more of my discoveries.



(Figure 2: On the left is a picture of *Boechera pinzliae* 1B.3. On the right is *Eriogonum microthecum* var. *alpinum* 4.3