

Clarkia jolonensis
Jolon clarkia

The genus *Clarkia* is a member of the *Onagraceae* (evening primrose) family and was named after William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. There are 42 clarkias worldwide; 41 grow in the US, 40 grow in California, 34 are endemic to California and one, *jolonensis*, is endemic to Monterey County. (*Clarkia lewisii* is basically only in Monterey County, but as one specimen was collected in another county, it cannot be listed as endemic.)

All clarkias have 4 sepals, 4 petals, a 4 lobed stigma, an inferior ovary, and most have 8 anthers (3 species have 4 anthers). *C. jolonensis* has 8 anthers in two series. The outer anthers are longer and are lavender and the inner are shorter and are paler. *Clarkia jolonensis* is easily and often mistaken for *Clarkia lewisii* as the flowers are very similar. The main difference between *C. jolonensis* and *C. lewisii* is what the plant does above the open flower. In *C. jolonensis* the stem is erect above the open flower with the buds nodding over and spaced apart. In *C. lewisii* the stem turns down immediately after the open flower and the nodding buds are very close together. Late in the season when there are no buds left or if the plant is small and only has 2 buds, it is extremely difficult to distinguish between the two as *C. lewisii* grows throughout the county including the area where *C. jolonensis* grows.

Clarkia jolonensis is listed as List 1B-2 in the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants. This equates to "Fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened). It has a state ranking of S2.2 which means the state feels there are 6 to 20 occurrences or 1,000 to 3,000 individuals or 2,000-10,000 acres. While the database shows 16 locations, I have only been able to find 4 and possibly a fifth location. I am very sure some of the locations listed, like Soberanes Point or Chews Ridge, are in fact *C. lewisii* locations. I have been trying to prove the plant is rarer than people think and should be listed both state and federally.

The center of *Clarkia jolonensis* is a pie-shaped section with Jolon at the point, Bradley at one end, and San Lucas at the other. I have found one location near Arroyo Seco which leads me to believe it could be between the center and Arroyo Seco. *C. jolonensis* like all Clarkias is a beautiful plant and deserves recognition and protection.

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