

Rare Plant Treasure Hunt for *Clinopodium mimuloides*

Take a Backpack Trip to Find *Clinopodium mimuloides* on top of the Topatopa Mountains

Leader: David Magney. Join David and CNPS for this rare plant treasure hunt backpacking trip to the top of the Topatopa Mountains in the Los Padres National Forest. This plant has not been observed in this area for over 100 years, and it is time to see if we can find it again and record its condition.

Access is restricted to the trailhead, at the east end of the Nordhoff Ridge Forest Service Road, which can only be driven by four-wheel-drive vehicles, by permission/permit only by the Los Padres National Forest. Since it takes a while just to drive to the trailhead, and the trail on the top of the mountains is long, we need to maximize the time we have to search for this attractive plant in the Mint family, so we will backpack in and camp overnight somewhere along the trail.

This will be a fairly strenuous hike (carrying a backpack for wilderness camping certainly makes hiking more strenuous), and mostly above 5,000 feet in elevation.

Bring lots of water, food for 4 meals, lug-soled hiking boots/shoes, sleeping bag (and backpack tent if you like), sunscreen, a hat, and a camera. To RSVP and for further information, email David Magney at rareplants@cnpsci.org.

Clinopodium mimuloides [*Satureja mimuloides*], Monkeyflower Savory or Yerba Buena, is a member of the mint family (Lamiaceae). It is an erect perennial herb to subshrub <2 m. Stems are nonwoody except occasionally at base. It has long hairs long that are \pm spreading. Leaves are 35-80 mm long, 15-55 mm wide, \pm ovate to triangular in outline, shallowly, irregularly crenate-dentate margins, and white appressed hairs on the surface. The inflorescence consists of 1-6 flowers per leaf axil, and pedicels 2-3 cm long. Flowers are zygomorphic. The calyx is 14-17 mm long, tubular-bell-shaped, with veins purple, and lobes 3-5 mm long. The corolla is 15-35 mm long, salmon-orange, generally faded when dry. Fruits are \pm 2 mm, brown, with a surface smooth.

Clinopodium mimuloides is rare, CNPS 4.2, and may actually qualify for a rarer rarity ranking. It occurs in moist places, streambanks, chaparral, and woodlands between 400-1,800 m elevation and blooms between June and October.



Photos by John Game