

Closing Data Gaps for Invasive Plant Populations in CalWeedMapper/Calflora

When looking at a distribution map in CalWeedMapper, two types of data gaps present themselves. One type involves quads where expert said that “yes, this plant is present,” but no Calflora points are present within that quad. These are “un-mapped” quads. The second type involves quads where expert knowledge said that the plant was not thought to be present, but there are Calflora points for that plant in the quad. These are “mystery” observations.

Un-Mapped Quads

If the presence of a particular plant in a particular quad is regionally important (the quad is isolated from other populations of the plant, or the plant has been identified as a regional eradication target, for instance) then it is important to map the populations in that quad. All known populations within that quad should be field mapped, and the data entered into Calflora.

Mystery Points

Observations of a plant in a quad where the plant was not thought to be present should be investigated if it might be regionally important (again, if it’s potentially a satellite population, or if the plant has been selected for regional eradication). This means looking at the location on Calflora and investigating in the field to determine if in fact the plant is present at that location. Frequently these mystery points are older observations that may have inaccurate coordinates or incorrect species identification. After visiting the site, add an assessment to the Calflora record and select either “verified” or “searched for but not found” based on whether you found the plant there or not. (For instructions, see the “How-To” document on designating management status in Calflora.

Changes that you make in Calflora will result in updates in CalWeedMapper (within a day—the sites share data once a day). If you add points into Calflora for un-mapped quads, these will be shown in CalWeedMapper. If you designate a mystery point as “searched for but not found” it will no longer be shown in CalWeedMapper. Both of these will strengthen the accuracy of our landscape-level maps of invasive plant distribution and spread.