

LITTLE MOUSETAIL (MYOSURUS MINIMUS SSP. APUS)

California Native Plant Society List 3

**Description**

Little mousetail is a tiny, tufted annual in the buttercup family (Ranunculaceae). Both the narrow leaves and the leafless flower stalks originate from base of the plant. The leaves are thread-like or very narrow and are at most 3.5 inches (9 cm) tall, whereas the flower stalks are less than 3 inches (7 cm) tall. The stalks bear elongated clusters of inconspicuous, greenish flowers from March to June. The tiny flower stalks resemble the tail of a mouse, especially when the brown seeds replace the flowers.

Habitat

Little mousetail grows in alkaline vernal pools and grasslands.

Range/distribution

It is widely distributed from Oregon to Baja California, although some botanists think that the Central Valley plants may be different from those elsewhere. In the San Joaquin Valley, little mousetail is found in Colusa, Contra Costa, Alameda, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Kern counties and possibly in Merced County.

Photo: © Greg Mason from Calphotos:
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