



Administering
Campus
UC Davis

Established
1983

Location

Solano County, 19 km (12 mi) south of Dixon on Highway 113; 45 minutes southwest of Sacramento; 1.5 hours northeast of San Francisco off Interstate 80; 25 minutes from Davis campus.

Size

634 ha (1,566 acres)

Elevation

2 to 8 m (5 to 25 ft)

Average Precipitation

43 to 52 cm (17 to 20 in) per year

Average Temperatures

January: 8°C (46°F)

July: 31°C (87°F)

Facilities

None; this site best suited for day use.

Databases

Geographic information system (GIS) aids management of sensitive plants and animals; complete floral and faunal lists in *Jepson Prairie Handbook*.

Personnel

Roving staff reserve manager; no on-site personnel.

NRS Publications

Reserve brochure published 1988.

Contact Information

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NRS Website

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Jepson Prairie Reserve

Located in the southern Sacramento Valley, the Jepson Prairie Reserve is an island of remnant natural prairie in a wide alluvial floodplain used primarily for agriculture. The reserve protects one of the best few remaining vernal-pool habitats, which are found only in the western United States and few other places in the world, as well as precious remnants of native bunchgrass prairie that once covered one-fourth of California. As Olcott Lake and other large vernal pools evaporate each spring, millions of native wildflowers bloom around them, forming concentric rings of yellow, white, and blue. Many plant and animal species found on site are endemic to vernal-pool habitats, including three listed shrimp species. The site itself provides the only known home for the federally threatened delta green ground beetle (*Elaphrus viridis*) and federally and state-endangered Solano grass (*Tuctoria mucronata*). Altogether, over 400 species and 64 families of plants, including 15 rare and endangered plants, are found on site, notably dwarf downingia, federal proposed-threatened and state-endangered Colusa grass (*Neostapfia colusana*), and federal-candidates delta tule pea (*Lathyrus jepsonii* var *jepsonii*) and fragrant fritillary (*Fritillaria liliacea*). Two sloughs flow across corners of the site, providing year-round habitat for a variety of wildlife, including beaver, otter, waterfowl, and several threatened fish species. The reserve land is owned by the Solano Land Trust (SLT), and protected by SLT and The Nature Conservancy (TNC); UC assists in the management of this site. The reserve is named in memory of pioneering botanist Willis Linn Jepson, a Solano County native.

Selected Research

Amphibian decline in California.

Nesting biology of bees.

Systematics of the genus *Downingia*.

Spatial structure and plant-pollinator interactions.

Effects of controlled burning of native bunchgrasses.

Special Programs

Jepson Prairie Docents Program: Fifty UC Davis-trained docents hold an annual open house and lead reserve tours from early March to mid-May; contact SCFOSF: 707-421-1351 (for docents, call: Kate Mawdsley 530-758-5093.)