

## Recording and Entering Data

When monitoring plants, data can be recorded in a few different ways. A Data Collection Form is available on the Chapter website ([ebcnps.org](http://ebcnps.org)), or if you prefer, you can contact me at [diannelake@yahoo.com](mailto:diannelake@yahoo.com), and I can email you a copy.

The form can be used as a guide to the type of data that needs to be collected, or you can make copies, record your data, and email or snail them back to me.

Some botanists and volunteers prefer to take notes while in the field and fill out forms when they return home, but the one drawback to this method is that it is easy to forget to take notes on one key piece of data and not realize it until later when you are no longer in the field.

Data can be entered into the Chapter database, *Rare, Unusual, and Significant Plants of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties*, on the "Add Observations" page. The database can be accessed at [ebcnps.org](http://ebcnps.org) under the Conservation and Plant Science tab. Although the Observation form may appear long, only six fields are required and they are shaded in blue. But the more data that can be supplied, the better, especially the number of plants and any imminent threats.

One of the easiest and best ways to record data nowadays, though, is with your smartphone or ipad. Lightweight and easy to handle, data can be entered directly into your phone while in the field, with the added benefit that your device will automatically record the GPS coordinates of the population.

Our East Bay Chapter of CNPS has partnered with CalFlora to collect data using their ObserverPro App so that the data can be entered into CalFlora and our Chapter database simultaneously. An account with CalFlora is required (free) to get the App. Let me know when you have the App and the email address you are using, so I can add you to our East Bay CNPS Unusual Plants Group on CalFlora. When entering data, please be sure to enter it into our Group so I can download it to our database. In addition, as long as you enter it into our Group, I can control the exact location coordinates so that they are obscured to the general public (to deter poaching and vandalism), but I can still access them to make them temporarily available to volunteers for monitoring or to others with a valid need to know the exact location, and then change it back to obscured.