

Michael's Rein Orchid (*Piperia michaelii*)

Order: Asparagales

Family: Orchidaceae (Orchid Family)

Flowers: April - August

Piperia michaelii is a perennial herbaceous plant. It is found in only one location on the peninsula. The large leaves of this plant are basal, sessile, usually erect and spreading, and lanceolate to oblanceolate. Leaves are also ephemeral. The stems are often stout and somewhat cylindrical. Numerous bracts are present on the stems. The inflorescence is densely flowered and each flower is subtended by a bract. The flowers are green to yellow-green, strongly aromatic, and the scent is produced at night. The calyx is comprised of a dorsal sepal and two lateral sepals that are spreading to recurved. The lateral petals of the corolla are erect to spreading. The lip, which is part of the corolla, is straight to slightly bent and deltate to ovate. The spur of the flower is long and generally deflexed or can sometimes be horizontal. Pollen is contained within pollinia. The fruit is a capsule that is erect. The seeds are brownish and very small. This plant is an endemic to California and is also a rare plant (CNPS ranking 4B.2).

