This field guide is intended to assist practitioners of CRAM in recognizing and identifying commonly encountered plants found in estuarine wetlands. The plant layer* in which each species is typically found is also noted. Although this guide was developed primarily for the southern California region, many of the species listed are found statewide.

For the purposes of CRAM, a plant “layer” is a stratum of vegetation indicated by a discreet canopy at a specified height that comprises at least 5% of the area of a CRAM assessment area where the layer is expected.
Plants Commonly Encountered in Estuarine Wetlands

*Sarcocornia pacifica* (common pickleweed)
Commonly: short and medium
* formerly *Salicornia virginica*

*Salicornia bigelovii* (pickleweed)
Commonly: Short

*Salicornia subterminalis* (pickleweed, glasswort)
Commonly: Short
*Jaumea carnosa*
(marsh jaumea)
Commonly: short

*Batis maritima* *P. Mill.*
(saltwort, beachwort)
Commonly: Short
*Frankenia salina*  
(alkali heath)  
Commonly: Short

*Suaeda esteroa*  
(sea-bite)  
Commonly: Short to medium
*Cressa truxillensis*  
(alkali weed)  
Commonly: Short

*Monanthochloe littoralis*  
(shoregrass)  
Commonly: Short
Cuscuta salina
(dodder)
Commonly: medium

Distichlis spicata
(salt grass)
Commonly: short
**Limonium californicum**  
(marsh rosemary)  
Commonly: short to medium

**Heliotropium curassavicum**  
(seaside heliotrope)  
Commonly: short
Spartina foliosa
(cordgrass)
Commonly: tall

Juncus acutus
(spiny rush)
Commonly: tall
Isocoma menziesii
(coastal golden bush)
Commonly: Tall

Pluchea odorata
(salt marsh fleabane)
Commonly: Tall

Atriplex lentiformis
(Brewers Salt Bush)
Commonly: Tall