Theodore Payne Foundation, a non-profit plant nursery, seed source, book store, and education center dedicated to the preservation of wild flowers and California native plants. This a report for April 24, 2015. New reports will be posted each Friday through the end of May.

The cooler weather has given us a little more time to get out and enjoy the wild flowers.

If you haven't been to Descanso Gardens in La Canada yet, you should visit. The Native Desert Garden, and wildflower fields are looking very nice and it is lovely to spend time enjoying so much color. California poppy (Eschscholzia californica), lace-leaved and common phacelias (Phacelia tanacetifolia and Phacelia distans), bird’s eye gilia (Gilia tricolor), elegant clarkia (Clarkia unguiculata) and tidy tips (Layia platyglossa) are annuals that are still very showy throughout the Native Gardens area. The perennials that add rich color include woolly blue curls (Trichostema lanatum), monkey flower (Mimulus aurantiacus), scarlet bugler (Penstemon centranthiflorus), and deerweed (Acmispon glabra) and blue-eyed grass (Sisyrinchium bellum). If it’s fragrance you want, the mock orange (Philadelphus lewesi) and California buckeye (Aesculus californica) are in bloom. Just follow your nose! Descanso’s wild flower show is this weekend as well, so go and be delighted.

Staying local this weekend? Check out LA’s “central park.” Despite the skimpy rains, the hills of Griffith Park are blooming nicely. The elderberry (Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea), though not terribly flashy, adds delicate texture to the chaparral with its creamy-white flower clusters. Similarly, bunches of buckwheat (Eriogonum fasciculatum) add pinkish white stippling to the landscape. Also enjoy the hues of yellow orange monkey flower (Mimulus aurantiacus) and California poppies (Eschscholzia californica), showy evening primrose (Oenothera speciosa), and here and there along Zoo Drive, Jimson weed (Datura stramonium). Finally, watch for the spectacular Matilija poppies (Romneya coulteri) in the Zoo swale.

The Los Pinetos and the Waterfall Trails are the new places to check out at the Placerita Canyon Nature Center this week. Atop of Los Pinetos you will find scarlet bugler (Penstemon centranthifolius), California everlasting (Gnaphalium californicum), and many more. The shaded Waterfall Trail welcomes you with the blooming of muilla (Muilla maritima), tomcat clover (Trifolium wilddenovii), purple clarkia (Clarkia purpurea), elegant clarkia (Clarkia unguiculata), and Fendler’s meadow rue (Thalictrum fendleri). Still in bloom are caterpillar phacelia (Phacelia cicutaria), chaparral gilia (Gilia angelensis), and yerba santa (Eriodictyon californicum). Soon the absolutely splendid Humboldt lilies (Lilium humboldtii) will bloom.
Scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) at Placerita Canyon. Photo by RuthAnne Murthy

Indian pink (*Silene laciniata*) at ELC. Photo by George Nanoski

The vernal pool flowers are really **WOW** at [Elizabeth Learning Center](https://www.elizabethlearningcenter.org)! Effervescent hoover’s calicoflower (*Downingia bella*) and toothed calicoflower (*Downingia cuspidata*) cluster in the basins with flowering quillwort (*Triglochin scilloides*), prostrate navarratia (*Navarretia prostrata*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), California orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*), San Diego button celery (*Eryngium aristulatum var. parishii*), Otay Mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), thread-leaf brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), dense-flowered spike primrose (*Epilobium densiflorum*), vernal popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys undulatus*), bolander’s water-starwort (*Callitriches heterophylla var. bolanderi*) and gorgeous Sanford’s arrowhead (*Sagittaria sanfordii*). Other plants still continuing to impress are bristly bird's beak...
(Cordylanthus rigidus setigerus), calico monkeyflower (Mimulus pictus), Indian pink (Silene laciniata), Verity’s liveforever (Dudleya verityi) and Apache plume (Fallugia paradoxa) in the chaparral garden! The desert garden has california barrel cactus (Ferocactus cylindraceus), showy penstemon (Penstemon spectabilis), thistle sage (Salvia carduacea) skeleton milkweed (Asclepias subulata), catsclaw (Senegalia greggii), desert bluebells (Phacelia campanularia), Mojave plume (Camissonia campestris), Mojave lupine (Lupinus sparsiflorus), apricot mallow (Sphaeralcea ambigua), bladderpod (Peritoma arborea) Spanish needle (Palafoxia arida), pebble pincushion (Chaenactis carphoclinia), brittlebush (Encelia farinosa), desert lavender (Hyptis emoryi), desert holly (Atriplex hymenelytra), desert gold (Geraea canescens), owls clover (Castilleja exserta), chia (Salvia columbariae), Panamint cryptantha (Cryptantha inaequata), desert marigold (Baileya multiradiata), sweetbush (Bebbia juncea), emory’s rock daisy (Perityle emoryi), fiveneedle pricklyleaf (Thymophylla pentachaeta) and southwestern mock vervain (Verbena gooddingii). Also really stunning are the large planters we have here filled with California poppies (Eschscholzia californica). Come by for a visit...we are in Cudahy between Atlantic and Wilcox. Check in as a guest at the Main Office during school hours. You may visit the Desert and Vernal Pool gardens anytime as they are in front of the school.

Thistle sage (Salvia carduacea) at ELC. Photo by George Nanoski

The late season perennials are putting on a show at the Environmental Nature Center in Newport Beach. Showy penstemon (Penstemon spectabilis) and woolly blue curls (Trichostema lanatum) and California buckeye (Aesculus californica) are stunning! Bladderpod (Peritoma arborea), flannel bush (Fremontodendron californicum), Island snapdragon (Galvesia speciosa), monkeyflower (Mimulus aurantiacus), showy penstemon (Penstemon spectabilis) and prickly pear cactus (Optuntia littoralis) provide bright flashes of color throughout the garden. And there is still a lot of everyone’s favorite, the California poppy (Eschscholzia californica) scattered about. What a nice palette of color to enjoy.
The Puma Reserve southeast of Pinyon Hills, north of Wrightwood, (the transition zone between the San Gabriel Mountains and the Mojave Desert) is in full bloom. There is a 2 mile loop trail on the Puma Reserve. The star of the show is desert sage (Salvia dorrii), which colors whole hillsides with blue-purple. Other showy species include Mojave linanthus (Leptosiphon breviculus) with its showy white flowers (for a linanthus!), fields of two different gilia species (Gilia spp.), tons of pincushion (Chaenactis stevioides), white tidy tips (Layia glandulosa), carpets of woolly daisy (Eriophyllum wallacei), sun cups (Camissonia campestris), and desert cryptantha (Cryptantha similis). There are a number of plants of cotton thorn (Tetradymia axillaris var. longispina), goldenbush (Ericameria linearifolia), common phacelia (Phacelia distans), Fremont’s phacelia (Phacelia fremontii), a few larkspur (Delphinium parishii) and a few plants of beavertail cactus (Opuntia basilaris var. brachyclada) in bloom.

If you are going to Joshua Tree National Park, via the south entrance at Cottonwood, check out Fried Liver Wash for chia (Salvia columbariae), desert calico (Loeseliasmistrum matthewsii), barrel cactus (Ferocactus cylindraceus), desert willow (Chilopsis linearis), Canterbury bells (Phacelia campanularia), desert poppies (Eschscholzia spp.), and purple mat (Nama demissum). Also at the southern end of the Park, along the Mastodon Peak Trail, look for the stunningly colorful indigo bush (Psorothamnus arboreus). In Queen Valley including the Barker Dam, Split Rock, and
Desert Queen Mine Trail, look for the pretty coral-colored desert globe mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*). Also in bloom are nipple cactus (*Mammillaria tetrancistra*), blackbrush (*Coleogyne ramosissima*), Mojave aster (*Xylorhiza tortifolia*) and mound cactus (*Echinocereus engelmannii*). Yellow cups (*Camissonia brevipes*), Arizona lupine (*Lupinus arizonicus*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), and Fremont pincushion (*Chaenactis fremontii*) can all be found in abundance near Live Oak and the Contact Mine parking area. At Sheep Rock Pass scattered about are single-leaved onion (*Allium parishii*), desert senna (*Senna armata*), and Fremont pincushion (*Chaenactis fremontii*). Blazing stars (*Mentzelia ssp.*), sand verbena (*Abronia villosa*), desert senna (*Senna armata*), and Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja chromosa*), add a splash of color to the desert. Though technically not a wildflower, botany enthusiasts should keep an eye out for the strange fruit of the spiny cucumber (*Marah macrocarpa*) on the High View and West Side Loop Trails at Black Rock Canyon. Still, plenty of wildflowers can be seen as well. Wallace’s woolly daisy (*Eriophyllum wallacei*), little gold poppy (*Eschsholzia minutiflora*), cheesebush (*Ambrosia salsola*), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) and desert mariposa lily (*Calochortus kennedyi*) make the area a “must see” for flower enthusiasts. Hiking, or setting up camp, you may come across some ground cherry (*Physalis crassifolia*) on the desert floor. Silver cactus (*Cylindropuntia echinocarpa*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), brown-eyed primrose (*Chylismia claviformis*), hedgehog cactus (*Echinocereus engelmannii*), and barrel cactus (*Ferocactus cylindraceus*) are in bloom at Indian Cove.

In the **San Jacinto Mountains** off Hwy 74 east of Garner Valley, take a hike along Cactus Spring Trail. There you will find many lovely plants in bloom. Pincushions (*Chaenactis fremontii* and *Chaenactis glabriuscula*), narrowleaf goldenbush (*Ericameria linearifolia*), Wallace’s woolly daisy (*Eriophyllum wallacei*), goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), and whispering bells (*Emmenanthe penduliflora*). Scattered about you will also see chia (*Salvia columbariae*), desert woollystar (*Eriastrum ememicum*), San Jacinto beardtongue (*Penstemon clevelandii var. connatus*) and finged onion (*Allium fimbriatum var. fimbriatum*). Lastly, check out the very pretty Munz’s mariposa lily (*Calochortus palmeri var. munzii*). This will be the first of many reports coming from the San Jancinto Mountains, so start planning on visiting this area soon.

That’s it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, May 1** and check back each week for the most up to date information on southern and central California wildflowers.

If you would like to be a wildflower reporter send your information about wildflower blooms and their location to flower hotline@theodorepayne.org by Wednesday of each week when blooms of note occur.

**Wild Flower Events**

**Descanso Gardens** in La Canada

**Wild flower Show & Earth Day Event** Saturday April 25th.
10:00 am – 4:00 pm
The monthly Blooms of the Season hike is this Saturday, April 25th at 9:30. We meet in front of the Nature Center, and we will hike the 1.5 mile loop on the Ecology Trail.

Annual Open House. Saturday, May 9