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 **March 13, 2015**. New reports will be posted each Friday through the end of May.

Seems like the spring season will be short this year. Snow that covered the peaks on the San Gabriel Mountains last week is gone with the unseasonable heat and dry winds that we have experienced recently. So get out and enjoy the wild flowers while they are still in prime bloom.

The parks in the **Santa Monica Mountains** will be a “go-to” place for a while. Along the Pentachaeta Trail in the Triunfo Canyon Park, there is a nice variety of flowering wild flowers. Some folks haven’t seen these in awhile because of the drought, but chocolate lilies (*Fritillaria biflora*) are abundant. Other flowers observed include gooseberry, (*Ribes* sp.), ground-pink (*Linanthus dianthiflorus*), common goldfield (*Lasthenia* sp.), red skinned onion (*Allium haematochiton*), purple owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*), wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), common fiddleneck (*Amsinckia* sp.), Indian warrior (*Pedicularis densiflora*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), purple nightshade (*Solanum* sp.), wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpa*), miner's lettuce (*Claytonia* sp.), fern-leafed phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), wide throated monkey flower (*Mimulus* sp.), twining snapdragon (*Antirrhinum filipes*), bigelow coreopsis (*Leptosyne bigelovii*), Parry's phacelia (*Phacelia paryi*), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*), fiesta flower (*Philostoma auritum*) and the ubiquitous popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys* sp.)

Chocolate lily (*Fritillaria biflora*) and ground pink (*Linanthus dianthiflorus*)
Photos by Michael Charters
In Malibu Creek State Park along the Phantom Trail, you will find purple nightshade (*Solanum* sp.), broad-leafed lupine (*Lupinus* sp.), bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), greenbark ceanothus (*Ceanothus spinosus*), sticky phacelia (*Phacelia viscosa*), paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis californica*), popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys* sp.), and fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia* sp.). Further up the trail near the ridge, there is a nice display of owl’s clover (*Castilleja exerta*), red maids (*Calandrinia ciliata*), caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), and California golden poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*).

This is not a banner year in [Death Valley National Park](https://www.nps.gov/deve/index.htm), but it is still lovely. The southern part of Badwater Road, is a good spot to enjoy vast carpets of sand verbena (*Abronia villosa*). Not only a feast for the eyes, the sand verbena is also one of the most fragrant plants in Death Valley. The extremely hot weather earlier this month did do some damage to early blooming species, but recent small rain episodes may save the wild flower season, especially in the higher elevations. Scotty’s Castle Road is looking good, with some brown eyed evening primrose (*Chylismia claviformis*), and really nice patches of notch-leaf phacelia (*Phacelia crenulata*), golden evening primrose (*Chylisima brevipes*), and brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*). Further south on the Badwater Road, the areas between Mile Marker 40 and 48 there are delightful displays of desert sunflower (*Geraea canescens*) along with the sand verbena. On the west side of the park, near Panamint Springs and Father Crowley lookout, there are some nice brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*) sightings. It is pre-peak bloom in the Jubilee Pass area, but if you do stop and walk around look for great desert five spot (*Eremalche rotundifolia*). Walking up the alluvial fans in that area will reward you with some really beautiful patches of mohavea (*Mohavea confertiflora*), calthaleaf phacelia (*Phacelia calthifolia*), and shredding evening primrose (*Camissonia boothii*). The very fun gravel ghost (*Atrichoseris platyphylla*), broad leaved gilia (*Gilia latifolia*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), and Death Valley sandpaper plant (*Petalonyx thruberi*), will be blooming soon if not this week.
In **Joshua Tree National Park**, the area around Black Rock Campground are starting to have showy patches of color. Joshua Trees (*Yucca brevifolia*) are ready to burst into bloom. Joshua Tree National Park’s own poppy (*Eschscholiza androuxii*) is brilliant now and contrasts nicely with the baby blue-eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) and tidy-tips (*Layia glandulosa*). Woolly daisy (*Eriophyllum wallacei*) is dotting the washes with chia (*Salvia columbariae*). The wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpus*) is creeping up into the shrubs and along rock edges. At Jumbo Rocks, the shrub with the pretty pink blossoms—desert almond (*Prunus fasciculata*)—is blooming widely in the area. Wilson Canyon to Pinto Basin and in Porcupine Wash, the perennial shrubs are looking good and attracting pollinators. Brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), desert lavender (*Hyptis emoryi*), creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), thick- Leaved ground-cherry (*Physalis crassifolia*), ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*), and globe-mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*) are a few that are splendid now, especially if the starvine (*Brandegea bigelovii*), is decorating their branches. At the southern end of the park along Cottonwood canyon Chuparosa (*Justicia californica*) are in bloom at mile-post 33. Be careful of dive-bombing hummingbirds! Walk a bit in the area and you may come across the gorgeous blue Canterbury bells (*Phacelia campanularia*) and much more of what we mentioned above.

![Ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*) and creosote Bush (*Larrea tridentata*)](image)

In the Pinyon Ridge area of **Anza Borrego Desert State Park**, near its west boundary with Ranchita in the Wilson Trail region you will encounter some nice species. It is always best to pull over safely and get out to look around. Please don’t Drive and Botanize!. Fremont’s pincushion (*Chaenactis fremontii*), and yellow pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriculcula* var. *glabruiscula*) make a cheery display. More yellow and gold is on display with whispering bells (*Emmenanthe*).
penduliflora), golden bush (Ericameria linearifolia), Wallace’s daisy (Eriophyllum wallacei), coreopsis (Leptosyne californica) and goldfields (Lasthenia gracilis). Occasional pink and blue blooms of ground pink (Linanthus dianthiflorus) purple mat (Nama demissum), baby blue-eyes (Nemophila menziesii), bluebells (Phacelia minor), and chia (Salvia columbariae) dot the yellow landscape.

Traveling west from Ana Borrego and down along the San Diego coast, get to Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve for a great day outing. If you haven’t been to Torrey Pines lately, you will find that many of the trails are now refurbished and ADA compliant, and provide beautiful views of our Pacific coastline. This time of year look for native bulb species in bloom. Red-skin onion, (Allium haematochiton), blue-eyed grass (Sisyrinchium bellum), star-lily (Zigadenus fremontii), and wild hyacinth (Dickostemma capitatum ssp. capitatum). San Diego sea dahlia (Coreopsis maritima), encelia (Encelia farinosa), and bush sunflower (Encelia californica) provide a lot of cheery yellow color along with Southern goldfields (Lasthenia coronaria), tidy tips (Layia platyglossa) and Western wallflower (Erysimum capitatum). The vine species like wild cucumber (Marah macrocarpus var. macrocarpus), San Diego sweet pea (Lathyrus vestitus var. alefeldii) twine up the branches of the shrubs so they can get a sunny spot and your attention. Classic chaparral beauties blooming now include Arroyo lupine (Lupinus succulentus), fuchsia flowering gooseberry (Ribes speciesum), coastal sand verbena (Abronia maritima), California peony (Paeonia californica), climbing snapdragon (Antirrhinum kelloggii), Cleveland shooting star (Dodecatheon clevelandii ssp. clevelandii), and Ramona ceanothus (Ceanothus tomentosus).

Back up in the Los Angeles area, visit the Habitat Gardens at Elizabeth Learning Center in Cudahy. The desert habitat garden is at its best now. Thistle sage (Salvia carduacea) is at peak bloom and very showy. The bright blue Canterbury bells (Phacelia campanularia), desert blue bells (Phacelia minor), and Mojave lupine (Lupinus ordoratus) contrast nicely with the yellow and gold of Mojave tarplant (Deinandra mojavensis), California poppy (Eschscholzia californica) desert pigmy poppy (Eschscholzia minutiflora), brittle bush (Encelia californica), desert dandelion (Malacothrix glabrata), and goldfields (Lasthenia sp.). The vernal pools we showcased last week are still very colorful. Owl’s clover (Castilleja sp.), narrow-leaved fringepod (Thysothamnus sp.) with many vernal pool endemics are producing blooms in the basins: prostrate navarratia (Navarratia sp.), California orcutt grass (Orcuttia sp.), Hoover's calicoflower (Downingia bella), Otay Mesa mint (Pogogyne nudiscula), thread-leaf brodiaea (Brodiaea orcuttia), and Douglas' meadowfoam (Limnanthes douglasii). Flowering perennials in the chaparral garden include Island bush poppy (Dendromecon harfordii), Morro Bay Manzanita (Arctostaphylos moroensis), California pipevine (Aristolochia californica), and Santa Catalina Island dudleya (Dudleya sp.).
The school is located on Elizabeth Street in Cudahy between Atlantic and Wilcox. Visitors may park in the teacher parking lot and check in as a guest at the Main Office.
That’s it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, March 20** 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 flowerhotline@theodorepayne.org by Wednesday of each week when blooms of note occur.

**NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS:**

**Theodore Payne Foundation**

**Poppy Days Plant Sale**

*Friday & Saturday, March 27 and 28, 8:30am-4:30pm*

An annual celebration of our State flower and huge native plant sale, offering the region’s largest and most interesting selection of California native plants – with expert advice and discounts to all!

TPF members 15% off all day; non-members 10% off after 11:00 am; memberships available at the door.

**2015 Annual Theodore Payne Native Plant Garden Tour**

*Saturday & Sunday, March 21 & 22, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm*

Full details at [NativePlantGardenTour.org](http://NativePlantGardenTour.org)

*Tickets On Sale Now*