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 29, 2016. New reports will be posted each Friday through the end of May.

Really like this poppy pic. Keeping it as a headliner another week! Photo by George Nanoski.

Up in the hills of Griffith Park, you can spot the orange monkeyflower (Mimulus aurantiacus) forming hanging gardens on the slopes. Elderberry (Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea) with it’s white puffs of flowers are easy to spot as well. On Zoo Drive there are some banks of Matilija poppies (Romenya coulteri) near the Autry Museum. In the Zoo swale you can also see California bush sunflower (Encelia californica) and various salvia cultivars (Salvia sp.).

The trails at Stough Canyon Nature Center in the Verdugo Mnts. especially along the fire road give you a close up and personal experience with some of our most common scrub species. Common, but beautiful! See if you can recognize and name these following plants on your hike—bush sunflower (Encelia californica), elderberry (Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea) sticky-leaf monkeyflower (Mimulus aurantiacus), caterpillar phacelia (Phacelia cicutaria), black sage (Salvia mellifera), deerweed (Acmispon glaber) and prickly phlox (Linanthus californicus). Enjoy the amazing colors of yellow, orange, lavender, and pink and the aroma of sage while you hike.
Just when I thought I would not be getting any more reports from the desert parks, I found a couple of reports in my “inbox” from friends who visited Death Valley and Joshua Tree this week. Enjoy those reports below.

In **Death Valley** lots of flowers seen and photographed from Furnace Creek up the Beatty Road to the beginning of the Titus Canyon road, and then along the Titus Canyon road to the mouth of Titus Canyon. From Daylight Pass onward, the landscape was filled with flowers! At these elevations—3500 to 5300 feet—the bloom was just as good as the bloom on Death Valley desert floor was in late February. There are fields and fields and fields (yes, triple the fields!) of white pincushion flowers probably both (*Chaenactis carphoclinia* and *C. stevioides*). A number of other species are scattered among these pincushions. On slopes and hillsides Prince’s plume (*Stanleya pinnata*) is in spectacular bloom along with Mojave aster (*Xylorhiza tortifolia*). One memorable hillside was carpeted with the chartreuse prince’s plume and neon lavender and stanleya in bloom. Imagine the color of that landscape. Desert rock nettle (*Eucnide urens*) plants are covered with beautiful white blossoms. There are large patches of yellow tackstem (*Calycoseris parryi*). Some parts of the Titus Canyon road were lined with scented forget-me-not (*Cryptantha utahensis*), especially near Red Pass, producing a sweet fragrance that one could soak in by just walking along the road. Other parts of the road were lined with a large flowered gilia (no specific identification yet). Death Valley phacelia (*Phacelia vallis-mortae*) was everywhere and red blossoms of desert paintbrush (*Castilleja chromosa*) and beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*) dotted the area. There were even some of the desert floor annuals, that were prevalent in February, still in bloom on the Beatty Pass cut off road near its beginning. Floral treasures abound including the very cute three hearts (*Tricardia watsonii*), Shockley’s goldenhead (*Acamptopappus shockleyi*), Eastern glandular nemacladus (*Nemacladus orientalis*), annual woolly sunflower (*Eriophyllum ambiguum*), indigo bush (*Psorothamnus fremontii*), purple sage (*Salvia dorrii*), Stansbury’s antelope bush (*Purshia stansburyana*), cold-desert phlox (*Phlox stansburyi*), Parish’s larkspur (*Delphinium parishii*), catclaw horsebrush (*Tetradymia axillaris*) and winding mariposa lily (*Calochortus flexuosus*), all in bloom. The incredible scenery in this area makes this trip all the more special.

![A large-flowered gilia in Death Valley. Photo by Tom Chester](image)
In Joshua Tree National Park on the California Hiking and Riding Trail, out of the Juniper Flats backcountry board (Keys View Road/parking area). Take the trail to Juniper Flats. The first mile is amazing and full of flowers. At about 1.5 miles, turn onto the Stubbe Springs Loop and then to the dirt road for more displays. Large patches of desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambiguа*), white pincushion (*Chaenactis* sp.)
The warm weather is starting to dry up the some of the flowers at Hungry Valley State Vehicular Recreation Area. The fields of fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia* sp.) are fading and the goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.) have lost their luster, however, the poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are popping up in the grasslands. A loop through the native grasslands on Stipa Trail to Powerline Road will take you past a few hillsides of dark purple lupine (*Lupinus* sp.) and some large patches of bright orange poppies. Blazing stars (*Mentzelia* sp.) add some gold color to the mix. There is still some purple sage (*Salvia dorrii*) blooming near the “S” curves on Gold Hill Road and a nice stretch of scarlet buglers (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) at the north entrance to Smith Forks Campground. If you continue toward the south entrance you will go past a variety of wildflowers near the yucca flats. Look for the sprouting yucca stalks (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*) and for those that are already flowering. Remember to watch out for rattlesnakes and ask for a wildflower guide at the entrance station. Come out and enjoy the flowers soon!
Placerita Canyon Nature Center has a nice mix of annuals and perennials flowering now. The chamise (Adenostoma fasciculatum) is displaying its tiny white sprays of flowers on the ends of branches. The bees are busy foraging for nectar from the hollyleaf cherry (Prunus ilicifolia) blossoms. Delicate white star flowers on common muilla (Muilla maritima) sway in the breeze on their tall thin stems. The bright yellow slender-stem sunflowers (Helianthus gracilentus) are beginning their summer-flower show. Sun cups (Camissoniopsis sp.) add another shade of yellow when they open at dawn and again at sundown. Blue, lavender and purple contrast nicely all the yellow; and include common phacelia (Phacelia distans), caterpillar phacelia (Phacelia cicutaria), purple nightshade (Solanum sp.), black sage (Salvia mellifera), and yerba santa (Eriodictyon crassifolium). Dark purple stinging lupine (Lupinus hirsutissima) with their spiny stems seem to be more abundant this year. Blue dicks (Dichelostemma capitatum) and woolly blue curls (Trichostema lanatum) are still showy with violet flowers. The bright red scarlet buglers (Penstemon centranthifolius) stand out boldly among the green grasses. The pinkish-white clusters of California buckwheat (Eriogonum fasciculatum) flowers are just beginning their extended late spring bloom. The extremely poisonous, but very beautiful white star lilies (Toxicocordion fremontii) are showing off creamy yellow-green buds. Finally, the twilight-blooming soap plant (Chlorogalum sp. ) is ready to share its delicate white flowers with late afternoon visitors.

Descanso Gardens in La Canada/Flintridge, is in spectacular color and celebrating wildflowers this weekend with their Earth Day festivities. Members of the iris family—Douglas iris (Iris douglasiana) and blue-eyed grass (Sisyrinchium bellum) are displaying patches of blue and purple throughout the Garden. The many cultivated selections of monkeyflower (Mimulus varieties) add yellow, orange, gold, pink, and red confetti of color to the landscape. Three desert shrubs, Baja fairy duster (Calliandra californica), pink fairy duster (Calliandra eriophylla) and Apache plume (Fallugia paradoxa) have frilly blossoms in varying shades of pink. California poppies (Eschscholzia californica) are blanketing the Oak Woodland trails. In the Native Plant Garden, Chinese houses (Collinsia heterophylla) and tidy tips (Layia platyglossa) are providing lots of color along with wine cup clarkia (Clarkia purpurea), elegant clarkia (Clarkia unguiculata) blue flax (Linum lewesi), and chia (Salvia columbariae). California encelia (Encelia californica), desert marigold (Baileya multiradiata), apricot mallow, (Abutilon palmeri), and the yellow form of chuparosa (Justicia californica) are displaying varying shades of sun color. It’s very pretty and colorful at Descanso now.

If you are on any stretch of SR79 east of Temecula, the roadside landscape has four Inland region stalwarts in bloom now. Elderberry (Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea), is pretty and definitely recognizable at 60 mph and the ubiquitous chamise (Adenostoma fasciculatum) is lovely with tiny white flowers against the deep green foliage. Deer weed (Acmispon glaber) and brittlebush (Encelia farinosa) are still nice but declining, and covering lots of landscape with gold and yellow. On SR371, there were some patches of goldfields (Lasthenia gracilis) south of the Cahuilla casino, followed by some California poppies (Eschscholzia californica) and grape soda lupine (Lupinus excubitus) in full bloom just before the Cahuilla casino. In a few places north of Anza the road was lined with Arizona lupine (Lupinus sparsiflorus) in full boom. It’s been windy and very warm this week in the Inland valleys, so these areas may be very different looking if you go out this weekend. Connecting with SR 74 and heading west toward Garner Valley, check out Morris Ranch Road north of Kenworthy. The west side of the road was in pretty good bloom! Most stunning are the very fragrant grape soda lupine (Lupinus excubitus) in full bloom, and strongly smelling like grape soda! Follow your nose. The road also had a number of plants of diffuse daisy (Erigeron divergens) in full bloom and
narrow-pod locoweed (*Astragalus filipes*) is flowering nicely just west of Kenworthy. Walking west of Kenworthy along the dirt road, there is a nice field of goldfields (*Lasthenia gracilis*) and tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*) with some clumps of Engelmann’s hedgehog cactus (*Echinocereus engelmannii* var. *munzii*). Heading on to nearby Quinn Flat, there are patches of baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) in full bloom along with the Cascade onion (*Allium cratericola*) which had popped into full bloom as well; what a beautiful onion this is! Nice drive!

It’s Vernal-Poolooza at the Elizabeth Learning Center this week. Dry vernal basins fill in with Hoover’s calicoflower (*Downingia bella*), toothed calicoflower (*Downingia cuspidata*), Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*), San Diego button celery (*Eryngium aristulatum parishii*), spreading navarratia (*Navarretia fossalis*), owls clover (*Castilleja exserta*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), Otay mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), San Diego mesa mint (*Pogogyne abramsii*), thread-leaf brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), dense-flowered spike primrose (*Epilobium densiflorum*), Bolander’s water-starwort (*Callitriche heterophylla* var. *bolanderi*) and Sanford’s arrowhead (*Sagittaria sanfordii*). Also coming along in the Vernal Pools Garden is California sage (*Salvia californica*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) and clustered tarweed (*Deinandra fasciculata*). Catsclaw (*Senegalia greggi*) is replete with fuzzy blooms in the Desert Garden! There are still desert bluebells (*Phacelia campanularia*), Mojave sun cups (*Camissonia campestris*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), Spanish needle (*Palafaxia arida*), pebble cushion (*Chaenactis carphoclinia*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), desert lavender (*Hyptis emoryi*), desert holly (*Atriplex hymenelytra*), owls clover (*Castilleja exserta*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), Panamint cryptantha (*Cryptantha inaequata*), skeleton milkweed (*Asclepias subulata*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), sweetbush (*Bebbia juncea*), fiveneedle pricklyleaf (*Thymophylla pentachaeta*), red and yellow flowering chuparosa (*Justicia californica*) and climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides*). Visit Elizabeth Learning Center during school hours by checking in at the Main Office as a visitor. The school is located off Elizabeth Street between Atlantic and Wilcox Avenues in Cudahy.
That’s it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, May 6th** 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](mailto:flowerhotline@theodorepayne.org) by Wednesday of each week when blooms of note occur.
California Native Plant Society Hikes

Riverside-San Bernardino CNPS

Sunday, April 30

Etiwanda Fan, Rancho Cucamonga
