



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 14, 2017**. New reports will be posted each Friday through the end of May.

Many of our readers are on Spring break this week and are finally able to get out to enjoy the bloom-o-rama! The weather has been relatively mild this past week, and a few reports from last week, like Carrizo and Torrey Pines, remain with only a few updates. Remember that wildflowers ARE by nature ephemeral, so some flowers may be on the fading side of peak bloom. Don't be too disappointed if you only catch the end of the bloom. Think of how many seeds will be left behind for the next super bloom! By the way, the seeds are just as amazing to look at as the flowers. Check them out!

Spring wildflowers continue to bloom throughout [Figueroa Mountain in the Los Padres National Forest](#). Unfortunately too, the exotic grasses are having a good year and are obscuring some of the most photogenic flower sites. Starting at the first cattle guard and continuing up the road to the tree canopy area, buttercups (*Ranunculus californicus*), fiesta flowers (*Pholistoma auritum*), wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia* sp.), Johnny jump-ups (*Viola pedunculata*), miner's lettuce (*Claytonia* sp.), the charming Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), beautiful hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*) and blow wives (*Achyrachaena mollis*) are still in bloom, but these early bloomers are fading. Keep in mind, the wildflowers bloom early in the lower elevation of the mountain and are also the first to retire for the season. However, the exquisite wine cup clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*) are just starting to bloom. Within the tree canopy area, miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), as well as others I just mentioned above are still flowering, but are rapidly being covered by the tall grasses. Continuing up the hill, California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are in bloom along the road and on the rocky hillsides.

Figueroa Mountain, continued: If you look at Grass Mountain, a well-known area for poppies in other years, you will see that there is no orange peeking through whatsoever. Grass Mountain is certainly living up to its name. Passing through the rusty gate, and along the rock wall on the right, look for golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), poppies, Chinese houses, purple wild onion (*Allium* sp.), chalk Dudley (*Dudleya pulverulenta*) and clematis (*Clematis* sp.). As you continue up the road, you will see more blow wives, golden yarrow, goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.) beginning to fade, but buckwheat (*Erigonum fasciculatum*) just starting to bloom, along with the delicate Catalina mariposa (*Calochortus catalinae*) lilies, wallflowers (*Erysimum capitatum*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), buttercups, wild hyacinth, morning glory (*Calystegia macrostegia*) and bush lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*). Vista Point (large gravel turnout about 11.4 miles from the bottom), is pretty bare in regards to wildflowers, but as you pass the station, bush lupine continues to shine. In the field to the right, before Tunnell Ranch Road, look for golden yarrow, buttercups, wild onions, and a whole lot of stunning orange wall flowers. About a half mile further, the infamous poppy hillside—poppies and sky lupine—is sparse this year. However, the bush lupine, with their

delightful aroma is in its glory in this area. The road and hillsides are vibrant purple with them. Driving past the closed Lookout Road, look for California poppies, sky lupine (*Lupinus nanus*), wild hyacinth and globe gilia (*Gilia capitatum*). Because there is little to no grass growing in this area, the poppies, globe gilia and the sky lupine are thriving. Continuing on Figueroa Mountain Road to the Davy Brown trailhead, common phacelias (*Phacelia distans*), poppies, bush lupine, chia (*Salvia columbariae*), wild hyacinth and purple nightshade (*Solanum xanthii*) are in bloom; and even farther, in the fields adjacent to the large dirt turnout on the left, lovely chocolate lilies (*Fritilaria biflora*) are still scattered throughout, but will not be there for long. As you continue on Figueroa Mountain Road, look for goldfields, tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), wild hyacinth, golden yarrow, blow wives and delightful red paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.) along the rocky areas. Just beyond the gate at the entrance of Ranger Peak, sweet baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) are still in full bloom in the shaded areas as you continue up and over Ranger Peak, along with sky lupine, fiddleneck and some poppies. From Ranger Peak to Cachuma Saddle, the perennial shrubs are blooming. Bush poppies (*Dendromecon rigida*) are absolutely remarkable. Keep your eyes out for golden yarrow, manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* sp.), poppies, Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), fiddleneck, wall flowers, popcorn flowers (*Cryptantha* sp. and *Plagiobothrys* sp.), paintbrush, clematis, purple nightshade and black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) as you continue along this area. Turn left on Sunset Valley and look for goldfields, yellow poppies (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*), popcorn flower, purple nightshade, coreopsis (*Leptosyne* sp.), wild hyacinth, wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpa*), Chinese houses and clematis.

More Figueroa Mountain: As you start going down the hill towards Davy Brown, the bush poppies continue to paint the hilltops in yellow. Along this stretch, you will also find stinging lupine (*Lupinus hirsutissima*), chia, prickly phlox (*Linanthus californicus*), wild cucumber, Mexican elderberry, morning glories, clematis, globe gilia and scarlet buglers (*Penstemon centranthifolius*). From the Davy Brown Campground to NIRA Campground, look for more yellow poppies, chia, sweet baby blue eyes, gorgeous Nuttall's Larkspur (*Delphinium nuttallianum*), sky lupine, buttercups, coreopsis, morning glories, Chinese houses, bush poppies, prickly phlox, wild hyacinth and the beginning bloom of sticky leaf monkey flowers (*Mimulus aurantiacus*). As you return from Sunset Valley (since it dead ends at NIRA Campground), you will notice that the dirt portion of Happy Canyon has been fixed and is now passable. You can now continue your tour down Happy Canyon with a regular passenger vehicle. On Happy Canyon Road, look for stinging lupine on the disturbed, gravel hillsides on the left, along with purple nightshade. Also, making their presence, are Coulter's lupine (*Lupinus sparsiflorus*), poppies, globe gilia, Nuttall's and Parish larkspur, purple nightshade, clematis, black sage, golden yarrow, bush poppies, wild hyacinth and the last of the royal lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*). On some of the rocky walls, you will also see paintbrush and common hedge nettle (*Stachys* sp.). Enjoy your ride and wildflower viewing!



Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*). Photo by Michael Charters

Recent visitors to the [Carrizo Plain National Monument](#) have been enjoying a peak bloom that will likely last for at least the next week, maybe longer depending on weather conditions. Around Soda Lake there are robust patches of valley phacelia (*Phacelia ciliata*) and owl's clover (*Castilleja exerta*). On the road to the Goodwin Education Center there are patches of phacelia, goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*), and hillside daisy (*Monolopia lanceolata*). Daisies are dense! South of the Education Center on Soda Lake Road there are large patches of hillside daisy and goldfields in full yellow-orange bloom. This colorful scene is repeated on the way to the Selby Campground along with large patches goldenbush (*Ericarmeria* sp.) and the electric blue-purple bush lupine (*Lupinus* sp.). There are reports of widespread desert candle (*Caulanthus inflatus*) along with the ubiquitous hillside daisy in the Temblor Range. On Simmler Road there are great spots for tidy-tips and tick seed (coreopsis), and throughout the Monument, other displays of tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), blazing star (*Mentzelia pectinata*), cream cups (*Platystemon californicus*), show splashes of color. Also look for the pink crinkled onion (*Allium crispum*), Parry's mallow (*Eremalche parryi*)—also pink, sky lupine (*Lupinus nanus*) and recurved larkspur (*Delphinium recurvatum*). Many rare and endangered species are doing well this year as well, such as the California jewel flower (*Caulanthus californicus*).

When visiting Carrizo Plain National Monument please remember to bring plenty of food, water, gas, and clothes for changing weather conditions. There are some private property in-holdings in the monument. When exploring the Monument respect private property. Elkhorn Road is not recommended for low clearance vehicles and crosses a more remote section of the Monument, so please be prepared. Please keep in mind Panorama is a closed road, and Simmler road is impassable when wet (potential rain next weekend) and not great for passenger cars.



**Carrizo Plain National Monument. Photo by George Nanoski.**

Visit anywhere in the Western Mojave and be impressed with the colorful palette of wildflowers. Stopping on highways and going on unpaved roads can be hazardous though. So please take caution. Enjoy, but be prepared for any eventuality-especially getting stuck in soft sand or soil.

At the [Antelope Valley California Poppy State Natural Reserve](#), the poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and lacy phacelia are beginning to fade (but still a lot of color) on the **east** half of the park. So now it's time to turn around and notice the **western** slopes which are now in full bloom, but less dense than was the eastern portion. Still a nice destination and the surrounding desert continues to be colorful.



**Antelope Valley California Poppy State Natural Reserve. Photo by Jean Rhyne**

Desert candle (*Caulanthus inflatus*) is still seen along roadsides in California City Blvd. and on the way to the Desert Tortoise Reserve. Goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.), coreopsis (*Leptosyne bigelovii*), Parry's linanthus (*Linanthus parryae*) are still seen carpeting areas among the shrubs throughout the desert. Dotted throughout are wild

hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*). Drive to Ridgecrest via California City, Red Rock/Randsburg Cutoff (runs into SR 14, Garlock, and 395), and the entire drive is flecked with fading, but still photogenic patches of goldfields, Fremont pincushion (*Chaenactis fremontii*), desert trumpet (*Eriogonum inflatum*), indigo bush (*Psoralea* sp.), Mojave aster (*Xylorhiza tortifolia*), desert chicory (*Rafinesquia neomexicana*), notchleaf pectelia (*Phacelia crenulata*), and desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*).

Over at [Placerita Canyon Natural Area](#), they are rightly boasting about more than 30 species of trail plants now flowering. The masses of creamy white blossoms covering holly leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*) look like low-lying, fluffy clouds lining the trails. California elderberry (*Sambucus nigra caerulea*) and sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*) are flowering among the holly leaf cherry too. The fragrance of black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) and grape soda lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*) fill the warm air. Yellow pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*), whispering bells (*Emmenanthe penduliflora*) and scarlet bugler (*Penstemon certanthifolius*) add yellow and red color to the scene. Look, but don't touch, the stinging lupine (*Lupinus hirsutissima*) and California thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*).



**California thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*). Photo by Michael Viramontes**

At [Joshua Tree National Park](#), there are regions within the vast landscape, especially in the northern portion, which are really good for wildflower viewing. In the southern portion off the I-10, the carpets of annual wildflowers are fading, but for a few pockets of them in the washes. However, the sunny desert brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), red hot flowering ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*), and various cacti are still brilliant. Around Wilson Canyon campground and the trails one finds a great diversity of flowering plants. Again, there are not carpets, but a good diversity of beauties if you are willing to hike a little to get close and enjoy. They include: scale bud (*Anisocoma acaulis*), sand blazing star (*Mentzelia involucreta*), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis* sp.), pincushion (*Chaenactis* sp.), Canterbury bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), and in sandy spots, purple mat (*Nama demissum*), desert star (*Monoptilon bellioides*), Schott's calico (*Loeseliastrum schottii*), woolly eriophyllum (*Eriophyllum wallacei*). Mojave yucca (*Yucca schidigera*) and many, many cacti are looking especially nice now.

In [Anza Borrego Desert State Park](#), most flowering is now occurring above 2000 feet in elevation, and that means you have to be willing and able to hike up into the canyons,

and even to get to some, must have a 4WD. Some of these canyons hook into the PCT as well. There are some great little plants, but you must be properly prepared for the hike. Go to <http://borregowildflowers.com/pages/blooming.html> or <http://tchester.org/bd/blooms/2017.html> for excellent reports about the canyon trips

The Castro Crest area in Malibu Creek State Park and within the [Santa Monica Mountains NRA](#) is located between Corral Canyon Road and Latigo Canyon Road. There are some fantastic blooms to be seen here including many, many star lilies (*Toxicoscordion fremontii*). Along the length of the trail too, are masses of Pacific pea (*Lathyrus vestitus*) with wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) poking up everywhere. Be amazed by the sheer number and color variety of butterfly mariposa lilies (*Calochortus venustus*), and in shady, creekside patches, the tiny but vividly blue skullcap (*Scutellaria tuberosa*), yellow johnny-jump-ups (*Viola pedunculata*), bright white milkmaids (*Cardamine californica*) and purple fiesta flowers (*Pholistoma auritum*). There are large trailside, sunnier areas of woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*), Parry's phacelia (*Phacelia parryi*), paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.) and scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*). This is not a trail to be missed.



Fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*). Photo by Michael Charters

The popular trails with ocean vistas including the Guy Fleming Trail at [Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve](#) have some great flowers. Look for sand verbena (*Abronia umbellulatum*), bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.), phacelia (*Phacelia* sp.) and lots of poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*). Plenty of little white popcorn flowers and forget-me-nots (*Plagiobothrys* spp. and *Cryptantha* spp.), sun cups (*Camissoniopsis bistorta*), wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) too. Take in the views but don't miss the sweet little fringed linanthus (*Linanthus dianthiflorus*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), Nuttall's

snapdragon (*Antirrhinum nuttallianum*), red bush monkey flower (*Mimulus puniceus*), and paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.). Three more awesome plants here, sea dahlia (*Leptosyne maritima*), the little mousetail (*Myosurus minimus*) and the grand Torrey Pine (*Pinus torreyana* ssp. *torreyana*).



Sea dahlia (*Leptosyne maritima*) at Torrey Pines. Photo by David Stith.



California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*). Photo by Michael Viramontes.

A great Spring outing for the family is the [Environmental Nature Center](#) in Newport Beach. The California buckeye trees (*Aesculus californica*) are blooming and they are stunning! The pathways that guide you through the different plant habitats of Southern California display equally stunning Western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*), flannel bush (*Fremontodendron* sp.), sugarbush (*Rhus ovata*), and woolly blue-curly (*Trichostema lanatum*). Other colorful beauties dotting the grounds like Easter eggs are desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), Baja desert rose, (*Rosa minutiflora*), purple and white sages (*Salvia leucophylla* and *S. apiana*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), coral bells (*Heuchera* sp.), foothill penstemon (*Penstemon heterophyllus*), lacey phacelia (*Phacelia tantacetifolia*), and blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*).

[Elizabeth Learning Center](#) has blooming beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*), heart-leaved primrose (*Chylismia cardiophylla*), whispering bells (*Emmenanthe penduliflora*), the “bells” (*Phacelia campanularia*, *P. minor*), cream cups (*Platystemon californicus*), birds-

eye gilia (*Gilia tricolor*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), Mojave lupine (*Lupinus sparsiflorus*), pygmy poppy (*Eschscholzia minutiflora*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), Spanish needle (*Palafoxia arida*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), fishhook cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), and emory's rock daisy (*Perityle emoryi*). Moist vernal pool basins are showing off Hoover's calicoflower (*Downingia bella*), Otay Mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), thread-leaf brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), San Diego mesa mint (*Pogogyne abramsii*) and many more. Lindley's blazing star (*Mentzelia lindleyi*) is AMAZING right now in their Chaparral Garden along Coulter's matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), Island bush poppy (*Dendromecon harfordii*), owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*), blue palo verde (*Cercidium floridum*), baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*), woolly paintbrush (*Castilleja foliolosa*), arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*) tidy-tips (*Layia platyglossa*), poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*). Elizabeth Learning Center is on Elizabeth Street in Cudahy between Atlantic Ave and Wilcox Ave. and open to the public during school hours. Check in at the Main Office.



**Tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*) at ELC. Photo by George Nanoski.**

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, April 21st** 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 Tuesday of each week when blooms of note occur.

### **NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS:**

#### **Native Plant Week Symposium, Wildflower Show, and Book & Plant Sale**

Cosponsored by the Theodore Payne Foundation and CNPS, LA/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter

**Saturday, April 15, 9:00am-4:00pm**

Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Ave., Encino 91436, [www.lacnps.org](http://www.lacnps.org)  
Displays, talks, books and posters, plus plants and seed from Theodore Payne Nursery.  
Free admission.

Figueroa Spring Wildflower Tour, Los Padres National Forest,  
Santa Lucia Ranger District

**April 22, 2017, 9:00 am. – 2:00 pm.**

Meet outside the front gate of the Figueroa Station. Wear appropriate shoes, sun protection; bring water and lunch. For more info, contact [htarbet@fs.fed.us](mailto:htarbet@fs.fed.us)

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, [www.rsabg.org](http://www.rsabg.org)

**Wildflower Walks**, Weekends through April 30

Saturdays, 10 am; Sundays, 1 pm; free with admission or membership

**Annual Wildflower Show**, April 22-24

Saturday through Monday, 10 am to 4 pm

Free with admission or membership