



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 is a report for **May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017**. New reports will be posted each Friday through the end of May.

The weather has been cool and extended the life of some of our favorite wildflower destinations, but I think that is about to change. Get out to hike and enjoy the last of a spectacular wildflower season—all too short!

In the [Santa Monica Mountains NRA](#), the Backbone Trail eastbound from Piuma Road to Saddle Peak has a variety of flowers to enjoy while hiking. There are nice patches of golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), monkey flower (*Diplacus [Mimulus] longifolius*), and purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*) blooming on this trail. Other familiar chaparral friends to be seen include canyon sunflower (*Venegasia carpesioides*), purple nightshade (*Solanum xantii*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), woolly bluecurls (*Trichostema lanatum*) and buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*). Showy flowers that scream for attention among the shrubs are California Indian pink (*Silene laciniata* ssp. *californica*), Mariposa Lily (*Calochortus* sp.), elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unquiculata*), white pincushion (*Chaenactis* sp.), popcorn flower (*Cryptantha* sp.), goldenstars (*Bloomeria crocea*), fernleaf phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*), large flowered phacelia (*Phacelia grandiflora*), caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), and cliff aster (*Malacothrix saxatilis*).



**California Indian pink (*Silene laciniata*). Photo by Michael Charters**

The [Placerita Canyon Natural Area](#) has lovely trails winding through glorious oaks and native chaparral. Black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), California elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), and Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*) forms the subtle-hued, shrubby backdrop while colorful bush lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon certranthifolius*), monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) and, new to this flowering group, the slender sunflower (*Helianthus gracilentus*). Still flowering for a while longer, you really shouldn't miss seeing the Southern honeysuckle (*Lonicera subspicata*), purple nightshade (*Solanum xanthii*), and common phacelia (*Phacelia distans*). Lastly, there are small annuals, yellow pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*), whispering bells (*Emmenanthe penduliflora*), common muilla (*Muilla maritima*), golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*), and sun cups (*Camissonia campestris*). Look too for the elegant chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*) with their tall stalks of creamy white blossoms sticking above the landscape. This is a really pleasant outing.

A hiking group from a local chapter of the California Native Plant Society explored a section of [Bautista Canyon in western Riverside County](#) east of Hemet. A highlight included a few hillsides covered with goldenstars (*Bloomeria crocea*) and larkspur (*Delphinium parryi*), checkered with golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), Kellogg's tarplant (*Deinandra kelloggii*), and blooming shrubs including chaparral beard tongue (*Keckiella antirrhinoides*), Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium* var. *crassifolium*), buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum* var. *polifolium*, & *E. f. var. foliolosum*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber* var. *brevialatus*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), and chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*). They also reported seeing scattered prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*), which is always a delight to see.



**Goldenstars (*Bloomeria crocea*). Photo by Aaron Echols**

In the [San Jacinto Mountains](#), the Forbes Trail, on the north side of Garner Valley, is an area recovering from a mountain fire. Most of the shrubs are too small to bloom, but are re-sprouting from charred stumps. The best display was from the showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), which is indeed spectacular. Its electric blue flowers are everywhere in full glory. Everything else paled by comparison. There is abundant cryptantha (*Cryptantha intermedia*) with its bright white flowers, some wide-throated yellow monkeyflower (*Mimulus brevipes*) scattered about and, in one area, Parish's bluecurls (*Trichostemma parishii*). Occasionally one will see the cobweb thistle (*Cirsium occidentale* var. *californicum*) pop up in the landscape. Look for the patch of monkeyflower (*Diplacus* [*Mimulus*] *longiflorus* var. *pubescens*)—an interesting variant; and, too, one area of bush lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*) in beautiful bloom. There is some desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*) looking nice and some holly-leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia* ssp. *ilicifolia*) just beginning to show flowers.



Post fire scene, Forbes Trail, San Jacinto Mountains. Photo by Nancy Accola

The [Environmental Nature Center](#) in Newport Beach is still the place to take a beach day. The desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis*) and the California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) are still impressing us with gorgeous flowers. Pretty shrubs include the California buckwheat (*Erigonum fasciculatum*), woolly blue-curls (*Trichostema lanatum*), fairyduster (*Calliandra eriophylla*), Baja desert rose (*Rosa minutifolia*) and sages—white, black and Cleveland (*Salvia apiana*, *S. mellifera*, *S. clevelandii*). But it is the perennial show that is the best; royal penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), seaside daisy (*Erigeron glaucus*), foothill penstemon (*Penstemon heterophyllus*), desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), monkeyflowers (*Diplacus longiflorus* and *D. puniceus*), and California encelia (*Encelia californica*). Annuals, including California poppy

(*Eschscholzia californica*) and elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unquiculata*) continue to bloom, too.



**Desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis* ssp. *arcuata*). Photo by Michael Charters**

Elizabeth Learning Center is an urban jewel and one should visit to appreciate the extraordinary effort put into this by its faculty and students. There are several rare species that are thriving as well as our more common Southern California plants. You'll rarely see Orcutt's birdbeak (*Dicranostegia orcuttiana*) and chaparral prickly pear (*Opuntia oricola*), Mojave tarplant (*Deinandra mohavensis*), growing together in one place. Bluehead or globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), clustered tarweed (*Deinandra fasciculata*), saw-toothed goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*) and California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) are blooming. The now dry vernal basins still have vernal popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys undulates*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), Otay Mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), San Diego mesa mint (*Pogogyne abramsii*), and thread-leaf brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), but not for much longer! In the school's Desert Garden, catclaw (*Senegalia greggii*) continues its spectacular display of fuzzy yellow flowers, host to so many pollinators! Other species here include Baja vizcaino (*Viscainoa geniculata*), prince's plume (*Stanleya pinnata*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), desert lavender (*Hyptis emoryi*), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis villosa*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), spanish needle (*Palafoxia arida*), birds-eye gilia (*Gilia tricolor*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), Mojave suncups (*Camissonia campestris*), skeleton milkweed (*Asclepias subulata*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), fiveneedle pricklyleaf (*Thymophylla pentachaeta*), and chuparosa (*Justicia*

*californica*). The Chaparral Garden is splendid with Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), San Diego tornleaf goldeneye (*Viguiera laciniata*) woolly Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja foliolosa*), Orcutt's hazardia (*Hazardia orcuttii*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), sacred thorn apple (*Datura wrightii*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), blue palo verde (*Cercidium floridum*), chaparral honeysuckle (*Lonicera interrupta*), Santa Cruz island buckwheat (*Eriogonum arborescens*), Santa Barbara island live-forever (*Dudleya traskiae*), island bush poppy (*Dendromecon harfordii*), desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis*), palo blanco (Baja) (*Lysiloma candidum*), Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), wine cup clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*) and pink fairyduster (*Calliandra eriophylla*)!



**Orcutt's birdbeak (*Dicranostegia orcuttiana*) and chaparral prickly-pear (*Opuntia oricola*).**  
Photos by George Nanoski.

The high country (elevations above 5000 ft.) of Death Valley National Park is full of color with stunning blooms spotted near Wildrose Campground. The view from the road may be striking, but do stop to look around. More flowers appear once you slow down and take time to notice! Where have you seen flowers blooming? Let us know!

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, May 26th** 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:**

Mr. Nanoski, the Habitat Gardens, (Elizabeth Learning Center, Cudahy), coordinator is available for a more "hands-on" botanical visit during his conference period in the mornings from 7:30am to 9:00am. Send him an email (on website) a day or two before your visit.

## **California Native Plant Society Events**

Orange County Chapter CNPS

May 21, 9:00 – 1:00; Oceanside Barrel Cactus Hunt and other peculiar plants.

More information, visit [occnps.org](http://occnps.org)