



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 **April 21st, 2017**. New reports will be posted each Friday through the end of May.

This is Native Plant Week, ending on Saturday, April 22, Earth Day! It's been a tough time to enjoy natives during the drought years, but this year you should definitely get out and delight in what a little rain can do and appreciate our State's remarkable flora.

[Decanso Gardens](#) in La Cañada Flintridge is celebrating natives in a big way. In the Native Garden section they have seen the largest bloom of blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*) in years and seems to be just around every corner accompanied by California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*). The colors are in stunning contrast and just scream "take a picture." Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*) and Pacific bleeding heart (*Dicentra formosa*) are in shadier places, in full bloom around the El Portal Structure. The Desert Garden's desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), fairy duster (*Calliandra californica*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), and desert brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*) are showing their bold colors, and everywhere in the filtered sun under majestic oaks in the Oak Woodland section are California poppies and baby blue-eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*).



Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*). Photo by Michael Charters

From Paramount Ranch in the [Santa Monica Mountains NRA](#), the Coyote Canyon Trail, the Hacienda Trail, the Backdrop Trail and the Bwana Trail out of the old western ranch display lots of familiar natives, including wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), patches of owl's clover (*Castilleja* sp.), popcorn flowers (*Plagiobothrys* spp. and *Cryptantha* spp.), and fiesta flowers (*Pholistoma auritum*). There are white fairy lanterns (*Calochortus albus*) a flower that hasn't been seen in great numbers for a while. Amidst the chaparral section, caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), yellow monkey flower (*Mimulus brevipes*), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), Parry's phacelia (*Phacelia parryi*) and whispering bells (*Emmenanthe pendulaflora*) are found. Throughout the grassland area there are masses of globe gillia (*Gilia capitatum*) interspersed with yellow collarless poppies (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*), as well as butterfly mariposa lilies (*Calochortus venustus*), and Johnny-jump-ups (*Viola pendulata*). A very pleasurable walk for flower lovers.



Fairy lantern (*Calochortus albus*). Photo by Michael Charters

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 (*Achyraea 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. 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 dudleya (*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 lily (*Calochortus catalinae*), wallflowers (*Erysimum capitatum*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), buttercups, wild hyacinth, morning glory (*Calystegia macrostegia*) and bush lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*).

More on Figueroa Mountain: 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 gillias (*Gilia capitatum*). Because there is little to no grass growing in this area, the poppies, globe gillias 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. 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, blue or Mexican elderberry, morning glories, clematis, globe gillias 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 (*Diplacus [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 gillias, 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

The [Carrizo Plain National Monument](#), which has been so colorful (even photos from space!) for the past few weeks, is, as of last Sunday (4/16), on the down side of peak bloom. It is still worth a visit, especially for the focused botany enthusiast able to find interesting things without the distraction of the knock-your-socks-off color in the landscape. The southern end of the Monument is losing color faster than the rest of the landscape, but along Soda Lake Road, Simmler Road, and parts of the Northern Tumbler Mountains still have patches of hillside daisy (*Monolopia lanceolata*), valley phacelia (*Phacelia ciliata*), some owl's clover (*Castilleja exerta*), goldenbush (*Ericarmeria* sp.), tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), pink crinkled onion (*Allium crispum*), blazing star (*Mentzelia pectinata*), and maybe still, a few recurved larkspur (*Delphinium recurvatum*). Please, when exploring the Monument, respect private property.

[Hungry Valley SVRA](#) is still awash in yellow blooms throughout the valley. Poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are spotted with their characteristic orange color in the grasslands, but are mostly scattered individual plants. The bush lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*) is still showy along Spaghetti Pass and there is a nice patch of the purple phacelia (*Phacelia* sp.) as you drop into the valley. Baby blues-eyes (*Nemophila*

menziesii) can still be found in some areas, but the fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia* sp.) are fading fast. The bright yellow valley sunflowers (*Coreopsis* sp.) near Sterling Campground are particularly eye-catching with the paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.) and the scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) beginning to add some red splotches to the scene. The Mojave yuccas (*Yucca schidigera*) are starting to bloom in the south end of the park and are worth a look and makes backdrop for good selfies! Remember, though, that the warm weather brings out the snakes. Though rattlesnakes are rarely deadly, they are dangerous and should be avoided; they will defend themselves if they feel threatened. Please remember to watch for snakes as you are looking at the wildflowers.

At the [Antelope Valley California Poppy State Natural Reserve](#), the poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are beginning to fade east to west, but the **western** slopes are still in good color, but less dense than was the eastern portion. A nice destination for an Earth Day outing, and the surrounding desert continues to be interesting if not as colorful as the past few weeks.



Caution! Do not argue with this guy about “right-of-way”. Photo by Jean Rhyne

The drive north on SR 14/395, north of Red Rock State Park is still nice in the little side canyons like Short Canyon. A high clearance vehicle, willingness to hike a little (moderate), a cautious yet adventurous attitude will take you to some nice flower sightings. The challenge is to find pygmy poppy (*Canbya candida*)! It's tiny!



Pygmy poppy (*Canbya candida*). Photo by Michael Charters

Over at [Placerita Canyon Natural Area](#), blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), flowering ash (*Fraxinus dipetela*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), deerweed (*Acmispon glabra*), holly-leaf cherry (*Prunus illicifolia*), sugarbush (*Rhus ovata*), yerba santa (*Eriodictyon* sp.) and California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) are in various stages of bloom as showy representatives of the unique California chaparral. The fragrance of black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) and Southern honeysuckle (*Lonicera subspicata*) fill the warm air. Purple nightshade (*Solanum xanthii*), yellow pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*), whispering bells (*Emmenanthe pendulaflora*), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) and wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) add even more color to the already wild color palette of the landscape.

At [Joshua Tree National Park](#), there are regions within the vast landscape, especially in the northern portion, that are really good for wildflower viewing. Check out the areas around Skull Rock, Keys View, Hidden Valley, Indian Cove and Wilson Campground. In the southern portion off the I-10, the carpets of annual wildflowers are gone but for a few pockets of them in the washes. However, the sunny desert brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), red-hot flowering ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*), creosote (*Larrea tridentata*) and various cacti are still brilliant. One can find a great diversity of flowering plants, if you are willing to hike a little to get close and enjoy. They include: desert senna (*Senna armata*), 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 3000 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.

A great Earth Day outing for the family is at 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-curls (*Trichostema lanatum*). Other colorful beauties dotting the grounds 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 tantacetifoila*), and blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*). Lots to see here!



Phacelia and poppies at ENC. Photo by Michael Viramontes

The vernal pools at [Elizabeth Learning Center](#) are showing off some rare beauties. Look for Hoover's calicoflower (*Downingia bella*), toothed calicoflower (*Downingia cuspidata*), orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*), San Diego button celery (*Eryngium parishii*), spreading navarretia (*Navarretia fossalis*), hairy water clover (*Marsilea vestita*), 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*) and Sanford's arrowhead (*Sagittaria sanfordii*). Blooming around the pools, you will find Lindley's blazing star (*Mentzelia lindleyi*), Mojave tarplant (*Deinandra mohavensis*), bluehead gilia (*Gilia capitata*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), clustered tarweed (*Deinandra fasciculata*), owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*), Orcutt's birdbeak (*Dicranostegia orcuttiana*), saw-toothed goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*) and still lots of California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). Cat's claw (*Senegalia greggii*) is exploding with fuzzy, flowery goodness in

their Desert Garden! Other species putting on a show here are 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*), Emory's rock daisy (*Perityle emoryi*), Spanish needle (*Palafoxia arida*), birds-eye gilia (*Gilia tricolor*), beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), Mojave suncups (*Camissonia campestris*), desert plantain (*Plantago ovata*), fish hook cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*), skeleton milkweed (*Asclepias subulata*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), five-needle pricklyleaf (*Thymophylla pentachaeta*), red and yellow flowering chuparosa (*Justicia californica*) and climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides hartwegii*).

As if that weren't enough flowers, ELC's Chaparral Garden keeps pouring it on with prolific Coulter's Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), 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*)! Visit Elizabeth Learning Center during school hours by checking in at the Main Office. The school is located on Elizabeth Street between Atlantic and Wilcox Avenues in Cudahy.



**Above: Woolly paintbrush (*Castilleja foliolosa*) and Prince's plume (*Stanleya pinnata*).
Below: Hoover's calicoflower (*Downingia bella*). Photos by George Nanoski**



That's it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, April 28th** 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 Tuesday of each week when blooms of note occur.

NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS:

Theodore Payne Foundation, theodorepayne.org

Family Earth Day Nature Hike and Activity

Saturday, April 22, 10:00-11:00am. For adults and children of all ages. Free.

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

Descanso Gardens. descansogardens.org

Earth Day Festival & annual Native Wildflower Display

April 22- 23rd, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 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

Riverside-San Bernardino Chapter California Native Plant Society

April 22, 2017 Field Trip

Botanize the Blue Cut Burn Site from Swarthout to Wrightwood with Wendy Walker, Tim Thomas and Pam Mackay, 9 am to 2 pm, details, <http://riverside-sanbernardino.cnps.org/index.php/field-trips>

Orange County Chapter California Native Plant Society. Occnps.org

April 23, 2017 Oak Flat, San Mateo Canyon Wilderness

Meet 8 AM in the parking lot at Bravo Burgers, 31722 Rancho Viejo Rd., San Juan Capistrano (just off Hwy 74 near I-5). Free and open to all. Bring trail shoes, hat, sunscreen, water and lunch if desired. No water or restrooms. Leader: Ron Vanderhoff.