



Theodore Payne Foundation, a non-profit plant nursery, seed source, book store, and education center is dedicated to the preservation of wild flowers and California native plants. This is a report for **May 5th, 2017**. New reports will be posted each Friday through the end of May.

Heading up into the Sierra foothills along highway 198 east of Visalia on the approach to Sequoia National Park, speckled clarkia (*Clarkia cylindrica* ssp. *clavicaarpa*) are coming into season with their omen of "farewell-to-spring." They are putting on a fine show along Kaweah River drive to the community of Three Rivers. The foothill woodland perennials are looking good as well. A woodland walk along the Salt Creek/Case Mountain road off Skyline Drive in Three Rivers has pink fairy lanterns (*Calochortus amoenus*). It seems, though, that they are finishing a pretty massive bloom. However, other geophytes are coming into their prime in a very big way. A really nice side trail is what mountain bikers have named "Old No. 1," which cuts off the dirt road just past the second stock gate. The narrow, lesser used trail traverses the hills above the main road, undulating through open grasslands and under stunning blue oaks and crossing shady seasonal creeks. This trail with fine views of Ash Mountain and Shepard's Peak, is also the best place to see the floral stars of this region: pretty face (*Triteleia ixioides*) and its cousin, (*Triteleia laxa*). Annuals along this trail include mustang clover (*Leptosiphon montanus*), Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), foothill sunburst (*Pseudobahia heermanii*), and the locally rare Bolander's monkey flower (*Diplacus bolanderi*) and Congdon's monkeyflower (*Diplacus congdonii*). Also rare along this path is a perennial, heart leaf milkweed (*Asclepias cordifolia*). One annual having a typical good bloom year is common madia (*Madia elegans*). In May and early June look for Leichtlin's Mariposa lily (*Calochortus leichtlinii*) and butterfly Mariposa lily (*Calochortus venustus*) in the Sierra foothills and into summer at higher elevations.



Common madia (*Madia elegans*). Photo by Michael Wall.

On [Figueroa Mt. Road in the Los Padres National Forest](#), starting at the first cattle guard to the Davy Brown trailhead, many of the flowers are dwindling, but the few that are still in bloom include Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), chalk dudley (*Dudleya pulverulenta*), wallflowers (*Erysimum capitatum*) a handful of mariposa lilies (*Calochortus* sp.), California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), sky lupine (*Lupinus nanus*), globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), and wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitata*). From Ranger Peak to Cachuma Saddle, the chaparral-covered slopes are in bloom with bush lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*)—spectacular by the way— and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), bush poppies (*Dendromecon rigida*) and monkeyflowers (*Diplacus* [*Mimulus*] *aurantiacus*). Look for patches of bright red paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.) and scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*). Black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) is in full bloom as you continue along this area. Sunset Valley still has goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.), yellow poppies (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*), popcorn flower (*Cryptantha* spp.), coreopsis (*Leptosyne* sp.), and Chinese houses. As you start going down the hill toward Davy Brown, the bush poppies continue to paint the hilltops in yellow, along with sticky leaf monkeyflowers. Bright pink prickly phlox (*Linanthus californicus*) dots the slopes and rocky outcrops, along with Mexican elderberry, globe gilia and scarlet bugler. From the Davy Brown Campground to NIRA Campground, add the lovely Nuttall's larkspur (*Delphinium nuttallii*) and elegant clarkia and wine cup clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*, *C. purpurea*) to your flower checklist. Returning from Sunset Valley and continuing on Happy Canyon Road, look for Coulter lupine (*Lupinus coulteri*), poppies, globe gilia, Nuttall's and Parish's larkspur, golden yarrow, sticky leaf monkeyflower, and bush poppy. On some of the rocky walls, you will also see whimsical fairy lanterns (*Calochortus albus*).

The Stunt High trailhead at Stunt Ranch in the [Santa Monica Mountains NRA](#) is awash in purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*) mixed with golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), and chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*). Descending into the riparian woodland, where it is shadier and has more moisture, purple nightshade (*Solanum* sp.), canyon sunflowers (*Venegasia carpesioides*), fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*), hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*), eucrypta (*Eucrypta chrysanthemifolia*) and fairy lanterns (*Calochortus albus*) are enjoying the cool shelter. Climbing up out of the oaks to the open meadows, the landscape is filled with gold and purple hues. There are multitudes of golden star lilies (*Bloomeria crocea*), and more golden yarrow mixed with deep blue larkspur (*Delphinium* sp.), wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), blue eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*) and the exquisite tiny brodiaea (*Brodiaea* sp.). This colorful scene is dotted with a great number butterfly mariposa lilies (*Calochortus venustus*). Continuing into the chaparral is elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*), heart leaf penstemon (*Keckiella cordifolia*), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*), California chicory (*Rafinesquia californica*), caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*) and great swathes of Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*).

The Caballero Canyon Trail, which serves as an access point to Topanga State Park, in the [Santa Monica Mountains](#) is off of Reseda Blvd. south of Ventura Blvd. in Tarzana. The lower trail is blooming profusely with our familiar and gorgeous chaparral flora according to a recent hiker. Black and purple sage (*Salvia mellifera* and *S. leucophylla*), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), California sunflower (*Encelia californica*), deer weed (*Acmispon glaber*), sticky monkeyflower (*Diplacus* [*Mimulus*] *aurantiacus*), wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma*

capitata), golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*), soap plant (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), cliff aster (*Malacothrix saxatilis*), elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) all in abundance with lots of butterflies, too. Go and become reacquainted with our friendly species in the chaparral.



Golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*). Photo by Michael Charters.

In the Cajon Pass region, southeast of Wrightwood, there is a burn area from Lost Lake up Swarthout Canyon to the National Forest. Walk along a Forest Service road and you will see a recovering chaparral. Among the many resprouting chaparral shrubs are chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon trichocalyx*), bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), holly leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia* ssp. *ilicifolia*), scrub oak (*Quercus john-tuckeri*), basket bush (*Rhus aromatica*) and riparian trees sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), and Arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*). Only the bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*) was in glorious bloom. Many common perennials and annuals are blooming in good stands and include wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitata*), three phacelias—common phacelia, caterpillar phacelia, and California bluebells (*Phacelia distans*, *P. cicutaria*, *P. minor*), common and prickly cryptanthas (*Cryptantha intermedia*, *C. muricata*), and a little blazing star (*Mentzelia* sp.). Especially nice are Coulter's snapdragon (*Antirrhinum coulterianum*) and scattered Martin's paintbrush (*Castilleja applegatei* ssp. *martinii*) and some hillsides are covered with blooming foothill poppy (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*). Nice recovery!

In the [San Gabriel Mountains](#), on a hike in the front range from Three Points trailhead to Tiki Rock, you can find the surprisingly red snow plants (*Sarcodes sanguinea*) popping up along the trail. While one is “o-o-h-h-ing and a-a-h-h-ing” at the awesome vistas and rock formations, don't forget to look down at the San Gabriel linanthus (*Linanthus concinnus*), hulsea (*Hulsea heterochroma*), Davidson's phacelia (*Phacelia davidsonii*), western wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum*), elegant rock cress (*Arabis* sp.), and paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.). The trail has been restored recently too. It's in good shape, so get out and enjoy it.



San Gabriel linanthus (*Linanthus concinnus*). Photo by Nick Shah

If you were too overwhelmed with the superbloom this spring and missed out completely on our lowlands manzanita and ceanothus bloom, don't fret. The Idyllwild area in the [San Jacinto Mountains](#) is spectacular with Pringle's manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pringeli*) and whitethorn ceanothus (*Ceanothus leucodermis*) in full bloom now. Just about any road or trail is popping with these beauties. You are advised not to wait long to see this extraordinary bloom of pink and blue. May be gone in another week.



Pringle's manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pringeli*) and whitethorn ceanothus (*Ceanothus leucodermis*). Photos by Nancy Accola.



Pringle's manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pringeli*) flowers. Photo by Tom Chester.

Though a lot of the early bloomers at [Hungry Valley SVRA](#) have faded, other plants have followed with their later blossoms. If you come in the south entrance, you will notice the bright pink of the beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*) just past the oaks and at the yucca flats. The yuccas (*Yucca shidigera* and *Hesperoyucca whipplei*) are still putting on a show with the expectation of even more blooming in the next week. Heading toward Lane Ranch Campground, the large grey-leaved shrub along the roadside is Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*). It is in full bloom, covered with lovely lavender blossoms. The elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), which can be a large shrub or small tree, is quite showy now with large creamy-white flower clusters. The bright red flowering scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) is spotting the landscape in some places of the park with a nice patch found at the entrance to Smith Forks. There is still some purple color of flowering desert sage (*Salvia dorrii*) at the S curves near the campground. The bush lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*) is in full bloom at Spaghetti Pass, and poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) can be seen in small patches too. Showy fruits and seeds can be an interesting photography subject as well as flowers. Check out the grey-colored shrub, bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), going to fruit throughout the park. Its inflated fruits or pods, illustrate the name bladderpod well. Along the Pass, the yellow dandelion-like flower, silver puff, has gone to seed. It's called silver puff (*Uropappus lindleyi*) because of its large seed head that looks like a very large dandelion!



Silver puff (*Uropappus lindleyi*). Photo by Michael Charters.

The trails winding through the [Placerita Canyon Natural Area](#) are in full, native chaparral glory. You really shouldn't miss seeing the vegetation that makes Southern California unique. Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), flowering ash (*Fraxinus dipetela*), Chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), holly-leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia* ssp. *ilicifolia*), sugarbush (*Rhus ovata*), Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon* sp.) and California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) are in various stages of bloom. The fragrance of black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) and Southern honeysuckle (*Lonicera subspicata*) fill the warm air. Sticky monkeyflower (*Diplacus* [*Mimulus*] *aurantiacus*), purple nightshade (*Solanum xanti*), common phacelia (*Phacelia distans*), yellow pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*), whispering bells (*Emmenanthe pendulaflora*), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) and wild hyacinth *Dichelostemma capitatum*) add color to the chaparral palette.

[Joshua Tree National Park](#) is still in good bloom in some places. Check out the Nature Trail in Hidden Valley. It is reportedly very nice now.

[Descanso Gardens](#) in La Canada Flintridge has some very showy beauties as you stroll through the sunny Native Garden and the shadier Oak Woodland. In the Native Garden one cannot help but be distracted by the stands of Matilija poppies (*Romneya coulteri*)—what kids like to call “the fried-egg plant.” Verbena (*Verbena lilacina*) is another dominant in these sunny spots along with monkeyflowers (*Diplacus* [*Mimulus*] *aurantiacus*) and (*Diplacus puniceus*). Walk through the Oak Woodland and enjoy the displays of Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*) and hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*). Coming back out into the sun, the warm air is heavy with the scent of pitcher sage (*Lepechinia fragrans*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) and white sage (*Salvia apiana*). Finally, over with the desert display garden, one finds the colorful desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*) and apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*).



Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*). Photo by George Nanoski

At the [Environmental Nature Center](#) in Newport Beach, the pathways that guide you through the different plant habitats are quite fragrant with the sweet aroma of California

buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*) and the shrubby sages—white and black sage (*Salvia apiana* and *S. mellifera*). The honeybees are also beginning to discover that the California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) are heavy with nectar. The flannel bush (*Fremontodendron* sp.), desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), monkeyflowers (*Diplacus [Mimulus] aurantiacus*) and *D. puniceus*) and beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*) are splashing the gardens with their gold, blue, coral, orange, red and pink colors.

Biodiversity in the heart of urban Cudahy is alive and thriving in [Elizabeth Learning Center's](#) series of native plant habitat gardens! Look for vernal pool beauties like Hoover's calicoflower (*Downingia bella*), toothed calicoflower (*Downingia cuspidata*), vernal popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys undulatus*), San Diego button celery (*Eryngium aristulatum parishii*), spreading navarretia (*Navarretia fossalis*), hairy waterclover (*Marsilea vestita*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), Otay Mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), and San Diego mesa mint (*Pogogyne abramsii*). Blooming around the dry pools are Lindley's blazing star (*Mentzelia lindleyi*), Mojave tarplant (*Deinandra mohavensis*), bluehead gilia (*Gilia capitata*), clustered tarweed (*Deinandra fasciculata*), owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*), and California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). In the Desert Garden, catclaw (*Senegalia greggii*) is spectacular right now! Other blooms 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*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), Emory's rock daisy (*Perityle emoryi*), birds-eye gilia (*Gilia tricolor*), beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), skeleton milkweed (*Asclepias subulata*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), and climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides hartwegii*). The Chaparral Garden adds to the wildflower show with Coulter's Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), woolly paintbrush (*Castilleja foliolosa*), 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*), and Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*).

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.



Woolly paintbrush (*Castilleja foliolosa*). Photo by George Nanoski.

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, May 12th** 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:

Environmental Nature Center, Newport Beach.
Spring Faire, May 7, 10 am – 3 pm.