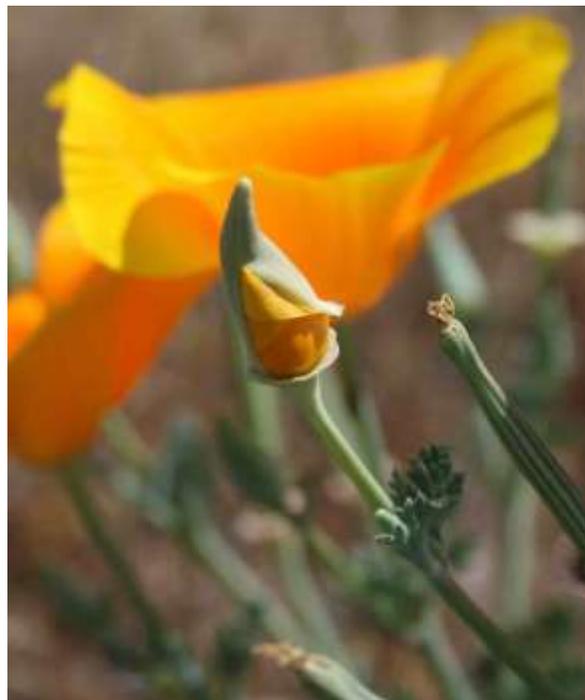




Friday, May 11th, 2018

This is Mother's Day weekend, and what better way to treat Mom than with a Springtime walk among our California wild flowers. Our local Public Gardens are perfect for such an outing and your first stop will be the Theodore Payne Foundation in Sun Valley! It's gorgeous at TPF with dozens of different wild flowers, perennials, shrubs and trees blooming in all shades of the rainbow! Take Mom and enjoy the peace and beauty of this native plant treasure.

Enjoy walking under the grand tree canopy in the Oak Woodland section of [Descanso Gardens](#) in La Canada Flintridge. California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are exploding with color. Coast sunflower (*Encelia californica*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unquiculata*) are cheery pathway guides. Move on to the sunny Native Garden and find waves of Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*) at the El Portal along with dainty little bleeding hearts (*Dicentra formosa*), pink fairy duster (*Calliandra eriophylla*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), monkeyflowers (*Diplacus [Mimulus] spp.* and cultivars) blooming in orange, yellow and pink, and eye-popping Matilija poppies (*Romneya coulteri*) make for floral drama in the garden, as well.



California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). Photo by Margaret Hurley

At [Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont](#), National Public Garden Day is Friday, May 11, with free admission. Saturday, May 12, is Bird LA Day with morning bird walks. Sunday, bring Mom for a leisurely walk in the garden. Late afternoon is best with day-ending breezes wafting perfumed scents of blossoms in the air. Favorite flowers to enjoy anytime you go, are the many aromatic sages (*Salvia* spp. and cultivars), monkeyflowers (*Diplacus* [*Mimulus*] spp. and cultivars) in shades of yellow, orange, red, and white, and palo verde trees (*Parkinsonia florida*) with their entire green-barked branches engulfed in yellow flowers. The joyful sunflower species are many, and include coast bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), slender sunflower (*Helianthus gracilentus*), canyon sunflower (*Venegasia carpesioides*), goldeneye (*Bahiopsis laciniata*), and desert marigold (*Baileya multiradata*) Tucked away along shady pathways are red columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*) and the very rare bush anemone (*Carpenteria californica*), with its large white blossoms. Sprinkled throughout are patches of phacelia (*Phacelia* spp.), popcorn flower (*Cryptantha* spp.), sun cups (*Camissoniopsis* sp.), poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and many colorful species of penstemon (*Penstemon* spp.).



Bush anemone (*Carpenteria californica*). Photo by George Nanoski

A truly imaginative wildflower display is in full bloom now at the [Southern California Montane Botanic Garden](#) in Oak Glen Preserve at the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains. It is called The Artist's Palette Garden. Landscaped to resemble the French

Impressionist painter, Claude Monet's paint palette, native wildflower seeds were sown by color patches to re-create Monet's artist palette with wildflowers on six acres of land! It is a must-see display and a special venue to take Mom.

Mom would really take pleasure in waking at [The Environmental Nature Center](#) in Newport Beach. The coral color of desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), golden orange California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), blue showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*) and lavender tansy-leaved phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*) are growing throughout the garden for her to enjoy. The lacy flowered Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) and the lush Catalina cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia* ssp. *lyonii*) will provide dappled shade while you enjoy viewing white sage (*Salvia apiana*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), sticky and red monkeyflowers (*Diplacus longiflorus* {*Mimulus aurantiacus*} and *D. puniceus*) and Island mallow (*Lavatera assurgentiflora*). Flowering prickly pear cactus (*Optuntia littoralis*) and Mojave yucca (*Yucca schdigera*) are particularly showy now in the desert garden section.

A quick wildflower report from the [Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve](#) at Huntington Beach. The bright pink beach sand verbena (*Abronia umbellata*) and yellow beach evening primrose (*Camissoniopsis cheiranthifolia*) are in full bloom now. The bonus of visiting here is the splendid bird watching a huge diversity of coastal sage scrub bird species, aquatic and marsh species and raptors.



Beach sand verbena (*Abronia umbellata*) and yellow beach evening primrose (*Camissoniopsis cheiranthifolia*). Photos by George Nanoski

[Placerita Canyon Nature Center](#) would be a lovely place to take the family for a walk through the oak woodland and chaparral trails. Pretty flowers in favorite pastel colors include yellow sun cups (*Camissoniopsis* spp.), white popcorn flowers (*Cryptantha* spp.), soap root plant (*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*) and common muilla (*Muilla maritima*), lavender and blue phacelia (*Phacelia* spp.), and gold pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*). Be sure to notice the blue pollen on the muilla and the bees working this flower! Flowering shrubs along the trails now include elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), the fragrant black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis*), purple nightshade (*Solanum* sp.), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), sticky monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) and holly leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*). Search too for perezia (*Aucortia*

microcephala), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) and morning glory (*Calystegia macrocarpa*) twining its way up shrubs to reach sunlight.

This is the last weekend to visit the [Antelope Valley State Poppy Reserve](#). The poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and most other wildflowers have faded on the reserve, but see Hotline report last week (5/4) for good viewing in surrounding areas. Still there are a couple of highlights to see at the Reserve. The beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*), which usually blooms after the visitor center has closed for the season, is in full bloom. The lupine bushes (*Lupinus excubitus*) are also still hanging on to their blue-purple, fragrant flowers. The visitor center will be closing for the season on Sunday, May 13th (Mother's Day).

Many of the annuals are beginning to dry up, however there is still a nice variety of wildflowers to come and see at [Hungry Valley SVRA](#). The best wildflowers are in the patches of grasslands along Stipa Trail between Powerline and Condor, and in crevices protected from direct sun. There are plenty of poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) that are still ready to bloom throughout the park as well. Head to the southern end of the park for a nice display of the yuccas (*Yucca schidigera* and *Hesperoyuca whipplei*) beginning to bloom, as well as some of the beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*). Wander around the yucca flats area between Aliklik and Lane Ranch for a scattered variety of flowers. Wildflower loops are two-wheel drive dirt roads, but you will need high clearance. Take advantage of turnouts, and be alert for OHVs on the narrow roads. Watch for rattlesnakes. All plants (and animals) are protected at Hungry Valley, so be respectful of our flora and fauna. Download the wildflower map from our website

If you have an adventurous Mom, go hiking in [Topanga Canyon State Park](#), where there is a meadow full of beautiful blooms. This is part of the Backbone Trail that is tricky to get to, but the rewards are great. From Topanga Canyon Blvd. turn west on Old Topanga Rd. In about a quarter of a mile cross an area of raised white bumps in the road. Find a safe place to make a U -turn and park on the dirt shoulder. There is a small, easily missed sign that identifies the spot as part of the Backbone Trail. The trail goes immediately and steeply down to the creek and then climbs up from the other side. This is an "in and out" trail. As soon as you are ten yards above the creek, you are in a meadow filled with flowers. There are the lovely Catalina mariposas (*Calochortus catalinae*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), buttercups (*Ranunculus californicus*), and a plethora of lupines (*Lupinus* spp.). In the woodland areas, there is morning glory (*Calystegia macrostegia*), purple and white nightshade (*Solanum* spp.), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis*), hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathaceae*), California bee plant (*Scrophularia californica*), bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*) and canyon sunflower (*Venegasia carpesioides*). It is quite a garden and has spectacular views as well.

Don't bring mom orchids. Bring mom TO the orchids! Stunt Ranch/Cold Creek Preserve, Stunt High Trail. This is another trail that has wonderful wild flower displays. The trail immediately goes down alongside a creek where there are stream orchids (*Epipactis gigantea*). Also in this riparian area there are purple nightshade (*Solanum* sp.), canyon sunflower (*Venegasia carpesioides*), greenbark ceanothus (*Ceanothus spinosus*), fiesta flower (*Philostoma auritum*) and, most exciting, fairy lanterns or globe lilies (*Calochortus albus*). Just watch out for the poison oak, which is abundant. The trail then goes uphill into some grasslands where there is an astonishing array of Catalina mariposa lilies

(*Calochortus catalinae*), lupines (*Lupinus* spp.), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrichium bellum*), golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*) and blue larkspur (*Delphinium parishii*). Continuing further you get into chaparral, where there is blooming sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), sticky monkey flower (*Diplacus longiflorus* {*Mimulus aurantiacus*}) and woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*). This is a very satisfying hike. The trail is off of Stunt Road and is reached from Mulholland. Turn south onto Stunt Rd. and drive one mile to the dirt parking area on the right that is defined by telephone poles on the ground. There is no sign. The trail begins at the uphill end of the parking lot.



Stream orchid (*Epipactis gigantea*). Photo by Dorothy Steinicke

Further east in the [San Jacinto Mountains](#), the blooms along the first part of the Cedar Spring Trail, from Morris Ranch Road to the Desert Divide has small patches of Davidson's phacelia (*Phacelia davidsonii*), and some plants of southern mountain phlox (*Phlox austromontana*) in bloom near the trailhead. Also find some plants of spear-leaved agoseris (*Agoseris retrorsa*). In the area just above the drainage, the paintbrush, *Castilleja applegatei*, was just about the only species in bloom, and it is lovely. Along the trail, there you will find small plants of California rockcress (*Boechera californica*) in bloom, along with a large number of violet (*Viola purpurea*). The bloom is much better from the PCT junction at the Desert Divide, to Cedar Spring, primarily due to the southern mountain phlox (*Phlox austromontana*). It was blooming nicely, almost lining the trail with blooms. Sierra gooseberry (*Ribes roezlii*) was also in full flower, with its beautiful red flowers, as was serviceberry (*Amelanchier utahensis*), with its lovely white flowers. Both of those species were infrequent. From the PCT to Cedar Spring, the trail was lined in places with slender sunflower (*Helianthus gracilentus*) and many blue curls (*Trichostema parishii*). There are a number of California penstemon (*Penstemon californicus*) along this trail, and they are large, happy plants. There is a single plant of chaparral currant (*Ribes malvaceum*) that is so fragrant that one could smell it just standing next to it on the trail.

The Habitat Gardens at [Elizabeth Learning Center](#) continue their Spring wildflower show! Most of their blooms can be viewed from the sidewalk on Elizabeth Street in front of the campus. The Desert Garden wows with brown-eyed primrose (*Chylismia claviformis* ssp. *claviformis*), prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis* var. *retrorsa*), prince's plume (*Stanleya pinnata*), beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), pale sun-cup (*Camissoniopsis pallida*), cream cups (*Platystemon californicus*), creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), cat's claw (*Senegalia greggii*), desert lavender (*Condea emoryi*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), Spanish needle (*Palafoxia arida*), cryptantha (*Cryptantha* sp.), spotted eucrypta (*Eucrypta chrysanthemifolia*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), fish hook cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*), skeleton milkweed (*Asclepias subulata*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), and Coulter's lupine (*Lupinus sparsiflorus*). Their Vernal Pool Garden has Douglas' meadowfoam (*Limnanthes douglasii*), Otay mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), San Diego mesa mint (*Pogogyne abramsii*), thread-leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), Hoover's calico flower (*Downingia bella*), and goldfields (*Lasthenia glabrata*). Additional species in the Chaparral Garden include bush anemone (*Carpenteria californica*), chaparral honeysuckle (*Lonicera subspicata* var. *denudata*), Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), woolly Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja foliolosa*), wine cup clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*), apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), and blue paloverde (*Parkinsonia florida*). Elizabeth Learning Center is located off Elizabeth Street between Atlantic and Wilcox Avenues in Cudahy.



Creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*). Photo by George Nanoski

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, May 18th** and check back each week for the most up to date information on southern and central California wildflowers.

NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS

[Southern California Montane Botanic Garden](#)

The Wildlands Conservancy, Oak Glen Preserve, 39611 Oak Glen Road, Yucaipa, CA 92399. Now through May!

<https://www.facebook.com/OakGlenPreserve/>

[Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden \(rsabg.org\)](#)

The California Butterfly Pavilion is opening this Saturday April 28, 2018. See all Events at rsabg.org.

[Los Angeles County Natural History Museum](#)

SATURDAY STROLLS IN THE NATURE GARDENS

Sat. April 14 (second Saturdays, Feb.-July, 2018)

9:30-11 am

The theme will be plant selection and appreciation with an emphasis on attracting garden wildlife. Free with Museum entrance. Register via 213-763-3499 Nature Gardens Director, Carol Bornstein, will lead walks with a view to plant selection and wildlife attraction.