



May 25, 2018

This will be the last hotline report for 2018. It's been another strange and surprising spring in regards to weather, but still a decent bloom. Lack of winter moisture left our popular desert parks with a very sparse bloom, but March rain gave life to the dry valleys and low elevation foothills and mountains of Southern California. With many wild flower fans taking road trips (or staying home!) this weekend, let's all try to get out for a late spring celebration of wild flowers!

For the final Wild Flower Hotline Report of the season, we invite folks to visit the [Theodore Payne Foundation](#) in Sun Valley. If approaching from the 210 down La Tuna Canyon (drive carefully please), look for regrowth following the La Tuna Fire in September. The masses of large-flowered phacelia (*Phacelia grandiflora*), the paler tansy-leaved phacelia (*P. tanacetifolia*), apricot yellow sticky monkeyflower (*Diplacus* (*Mimulus*) *aurantiacus*), stand out among others. A hike into the Verdugo Mountains will reveal dozens more fire-following species. At the Theodore Payne Foundation, thanks to the relatively cool weather, most flowers mentioned last week are still going strong! (See 5/18 report on the TPF website). A couple of additional showy displays include sacred datura (*Datura wrightii*), on the slope to the left of the nursery gate, the bright red fruit of Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*) the blue-purple flowers of cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii* 'Winnifred Gilman') and the golden yellow San Diego County vigueria (*Bahiopsis laciniata*). Along the sales yard road, near the Desert Section you will see the burgundy desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis* 'Burgundy') loaded with buds and blooms. Just past the East Sales Yard, pale pink San Clemente bush mallow (*Malacothamnus clementinus*) stands near a huge old Island bush poppy (*Dendromecon harfordii*). Come visit us



Sacred datura (*Datura wrightii*). Photo by Michael Charters

If you are staying close to home this weekend, visit Griffith Park. On the hillsides near the [LA Zoo](#), bright orange monkey flowers (*Diplacus longiflorus* [*Mimulus aurantiacus*]) are blooming like crazy, and along Zoo Drive several California buckeyes (*Aesculus californica*) and a row of flannel bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*) are in full flower. The Matilija poppies (*Romneya coulteri*) are flourishing in the swale around the Zoo parking lot and there are also great stands of California bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*) in bloom near the entrance.



Flannel bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*). Photo by Sandy Masuo

In the [Santa Monica Mountains](#), Red Rock Canyon is a secluded and relatively unknown hike, but it has some spectacular spring wild flower displays. Access Red Rock Canyon from Old Topanga Road. The road becomes a one lane dirt road at some point, but it will end in a small parking lot. Pay the “Iron ranger” and continue up the dirt road past the locked gate. There are large dramatic, red, sandstone formations that give the canyon its name. Right now there are great banks of elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unquiculata*) and speckled clarkia (*Clarkia cylindrica*). Interspersed among them are Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), blue larkspur (*Delphinium* sp.) and dudleya (*Dudleya* sp.) with large red flower stalks. These masses of flowers are punctuated by large clumps of golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*) and deer weed (*Acmispon glabra*). Looking around, you will also see caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), purple nightshade (*Solanum* sp.) and sticky monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*). There is quite a bit of blooming chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) and sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*) as well. It is a very satisfying walk. You can turn back at any time, but if you hike all the way to the “T” intersection, you can either turn left and go downhill to the Stunt High Trail, or right, and climb high onto the ridge top heading toward Calabasas Peak and beyond. Really lovely scenery and plenty of weekend to enjoy it.

At [Hungry Valley SRVA](#). The best of the wildflowers are along the main roads of the park. The purple lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*) and yellow sunflower-like balsam root (Ba) are blooming along Spaghetti Pass and giving some color to the arid landscape. Poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are blooming around Edison Campground and

the scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) near the entrance of Smith Forks is adding a bright red splash to the area. Some new flowers were seen this week such as butterfly Mariposa lilies (*Calochortus* sp), Grinnell's penstemon (*Penstemon grinnellii*), thistle sage (*Salvia carduacea*), larkspur (*Delphinium* sp.), and cobwebby thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*), but they are scattered throughout the park and you will have to hunt for them! Drive along Maxey Road towards the Oak Woodland Natural Preserve, between the Tataviam exit and the Oak Woodland Trailhead, and you may get a chance to see some of the butterfly Mariposa lilies along the mountain side of the road! These Mariposa lilies bloom in a variety of colors and there is a nice display next to the road. A few of the tall, stately prickly poppies (*Argemone munita*) can also be seen in the area, sporting their large white blooms that look like fried eggs!

If you are up for a hike to the Oak Grove, you may find the Grinnell's penstemon that is blooming off of the left fork near the huge oak grandmother tree. Another side trip to see some unusual flowers sporting their beautiful bloom is off Schmidt Ranch Road between Maxey and Jack Rabbit; on the mountain side of the road there is an area with a large patch of lavender sage (*Salvia carduacea*). Though the flowers are sparse, there is still an incredible variety blooming in the yucca flats area between Lane Ranch Campground and Aliklik Campground. Some larkspurs (*Delphinium* sp.) were spotted there this past week, and the yucca (*Yucca schidigera* and *Hesperoyucca whipplei*) are continuing to sprout new buds. This is also a great place to see the beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*) blooming. Wander around this area for some amazing photo opportunities. The cobwebby thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*) is a new bloom seen this week in the south end of the park between Lane Ranch Campground and the south entrance. Look for the tall thistle with the bright red-pink spiny flowers. There are still poppies, beavertail cactus, and scarlet buglers scattered throughout the park. The grasslands Wildflower Loop is still worth the drive, though the wildflowers are fading and are mostly congregated in the one area along Powerline between Stipa and Condor trails. Many of these are two-wheel drive dirt roads; still, you may need high clearance. The roads are narrow, so take advantage of turnouts to allow traffic to pass. Also, please remember that all wildflowers and wildlife are protected, so don't pick any wildflowers! Some of the larger bushes are also in bloom around the park; look for the pale purple flowers on the yerba santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*) the bright yellow goldenbush (*Ericameria* sp.), and the white flowers on the elderberry bushes (*Sambucus nigra* var. *caerulea*). Though many of the flowers are fading, there are still plenty to see.



**Thistle sage (*Salvia carduacea*), butterfly Mariposa lily (*Calochortus* sp.).
Photos by Margaret Hurley**

Late spring at [Pinnacles National Park](#) brings us a cadre of May and June bloomers. Slopes filled with California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), longstem buckwheat (*Eriogonum elongatum*), and Pinnacles buckwheat (*Eriogonum nortonii*) are attracting native butterflies to their sweet nectar. A variety of clarkias provide the last of showy annuals for the season. Look for stands or individuals of elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unquiculata*), along with red-spot (*Clarkia speciosa*), speckled (*Clarkia cylindrical*), wine cup (*Clarkia purpurea*) and Brewer's (*Clarkia breweri*) clarkias. Mariposa lilies (*Calochortus* spp.), are also among the photogenic beauties to seek out among the clarkias in the open and sunny landscape. There are still California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), bitter root (*Lewisia rediviva*), blazing stars (*Mentzelia gracilentia*), sticky monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) and golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*) dotting the hillsides and trails as well.

If you are traveling east to the San Bernardino Mtns. this weekend, plan to stop at the [Southern California Montane Botanic Garden](#) at Oak Glen Preserve, and home of the Artist's Palette Garden. The Artist's Palette is still looking good, but is on the cusp of waning if the weather warms significantly. However, the Hummingbird Hill and Falling Waters venues are coming into peak flower with six different penstemons (*Penstemon* spp.), five currants or goose berries (*Ribes* spp.), various sages (*Salvia* spp.), manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos* spp.) and a host of other wildflowers. Five species of hummingbirds have been seen buzzing over the hillside in recent days. The two-mile loop trail offers creekside plantings of mountain dogwood (*Cornus nutallii*), lilies, columbine (*Aquilega* sp), phacelias (*Phacelia* spp.), and many other native shrubs and wildflowers in the conifer collection and oak woodlands.



Mountain dogwood (*Cornus nutallii*). Photos by Michael Charters

At [Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont](#), now is the time to see the large buckeye trees (*Aesculus californica*) in full plumes of white-pink flowers, before they start to put energy into making 2" seeds and lose their leaves. The different species of Yerba Santa are having a great year. All are in purple-pale purple-white flowers: yerba santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*), woolly yerba santa (*Eriodictyon tomentosum*), sticky-leaved yerba santa (*Eriodictyon trichocalyx*) and the fragrant yerba santa

(*Eriodictyon sessilifolium*). California evening primrose (*Oenothera californica*) carpet open areas in the Communities section of the Garden. Their petals appear pink when closed, but are white when opened at dusk and dawn to receive their moth pollinators. Penstemons (*Penstemon* spp.) and monkeyflowers (*Mimulus* sp. and cultivars) continue their showy bloom throughout the Garden. The sunny yellow flowering desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*) also continues to add color everywhere at the entrance and along the trails. The sages (*Salvia* spp. and cultivars) are just starting to flower, and blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) are covered in white blossoms. But the 15' tall flower stalks of the chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*) is the real show stopper in the Garden. Memorial Day is Monday May 28. RSABG remembers the people who served our country. From May 23 until Sept 7, all active duty service members, veterans, and their families are welcomed free of charge.

If you are in the Newport Beach area and even though this is not beach weather, stop at [The Environmental Nature Center](#) for a botanical outing. Big flowering trees and sages are this week's show stoppers. 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*), and black sage (*Salvia mellifera*). Flannel bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*) and Island snapdragon (*Galvesia speciosa*) warm the gray mornings with their yellow and red flowers.

The Habitat Gardens at [Elizabeth Learning Center](#) (ELC) continue their wildflower show thanks to the "May Gray!" That is the drizzly marine layer of clouds in the mornings in the month of May. Most blooms can be viewed from the sidewalk on Elizabeth Street in front of the school. The Desert Garden delights with climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides* var. *hartwegii*), 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*), creosote bush (*Larrea tridenata*), catsclaw (*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*), brittle bush (*Encelia farinosa*), fiveneedle pricklyleaf (*Thymophylla pentachaeta*), chuparosa (*Justicia californica*), blue bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), bird's eye gilia (*Gilia tricolor*) and coulter's lupine (*Lupinus sparsiflorus*).

The Vernal Pool Garden at ELC has chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), farnsworth's jewelflower (*Streptanthus farnsworthianus*), Otay Mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), San Diego mesa mint (*Pogogyne abramsii*), thread-leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), Hoover's calicoflower (*Downingia bella*), clustered tarweed (*Deinandra fasciculata*), lindley's blazing star (*Mentzelia lindleyi*), Menzies' fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), California sage (*Salvia californica*), globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), wart-stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*), sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), spinescrub (*Adolphia californica*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), boxthorn

(*Lycium californicum*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), California orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*), 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*), mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cuneata* var. *puberula*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), pink fairy duster (*Calliandra eriophylla*), torhleaf goldeneye (*Viguiera laciniata*), sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*), Santa Cruz Island buckwheat (*Eriogonum arborescens*), Channel Island tree poppy (*Dendromecon harfordii*), and blue paloverde (*Parkinsonia florida*). Elizabeth Learning Center is located off Elizabeth Street between Atlantic and Wilcox Avenues in Cudahy.



Farnsworth's jewelflower (*Streptanthus farnsworthianus*). Photo by George Nanoski

That's it for this year. Thank you all reporters, photographers, and readers of the TPF Wild Flower Hotline. And to Joe Spano for narrating the recorded version of our weekly report! Check back in March 2019 for the most up-to-date information on Southern and Central California wild flowers. Meanwhile, let's keep an eye on the sky for the much-needed and timely winter rain.