



April 19, 2019

Theodore Payne Foundation's Wild Flower Hotline is made possible by donations, memberships, and the generous support of [S&S Seeds](#).

The super blooms we've been heralding during the past several weeks are fading in our popular locations like Anza Borrego and Carrizo Plain. **That does not mean spring wild flower season is over.** Now is the time to really get out and hike the trails searching for late bloomers. Some of the best native annuals, trees and shrubs are beginning to take the stage following their showier relatives. Weather is fickle in the spring. It's always good to call or check the location's website if you can, and adjust your expectations accordingly before heading out. **Please enjoy your outing, and please use your best flower viewing etiquette. Drive and park safely.**

The canyons in the [Cleveland National Forest](#) just east of the bustling urban areas of Santa Ana and Irvine are sweet oases of flower viewing. At the end of the pavement on Santiago Canyon Road and beyond the Forest Gate, which is closed to cars, is Silverado Canyon. Go around the gate and walk the unpaved road. You will encounter many showy chaparral species, such as the yellow bush snapdragon (*Keckiella antirrhinoides*). It is very abundant and at peak bloom. Also flowering along the roadside is thick-leaved yerba santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*). Walking into the shade of the coast live oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*), look up and find the pretty catkins of pollen-filled flowers hanging from the branches. Another tree species showing its load of dangling flowers is the big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*). Lowering your gaze closer to the ground you will find members of the phacelia quartet—wild Canterbury bells (*Phacelia minor*), Parry's phacelia (*Phacelia parryi*), common phacelia (*Phacelia distans*) and caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*). Tucked in among the shade of shrubs and trees is common eucrypta (*Eucrypta chrysanthemifolia*) and in patchy stretches along the road look for Pauma lupine (*Lupinus longifolius*). Growing well and covering other plants with its bright orange, stringy mass is California dodder (*Cuscuta californica*), aka "witches hair." In the shadier creekside habitat, another vine climbing up and over plants is the creamy, tufted flowered virgin's bower (*Clematis lasiantha*). All this is classic chaparral, including the very lush and abundant poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*)! Be cautious, and learn to recognize it! (See photo below.)

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Poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*). Photo by Michael Charters

Now, north to Santa Barbara County to [Figueroa Mountain in the Los Padres National Forest](#). Start from Figueroa Mountain Road, 4 miles from the town of Los Olivos. As you cross the first cattle guard and continue from the base of the mountain up to the oak tree canopy, look for both miniature and sky lupines. Accompanying them will be pink chinese houses, fuchsia-colored flowers of hummingbird sage, purple owl's clover and blue fiesta flowers. Driving up the mountain road and just before you get to the rusty road gate, you will spot a patch of adorable little cream cups, a poppy cousin. Driving on, you begin to see patches yellow and gold of coreopsis, wall flowers, golden yarrow and goldfields mixed with bright pink prickly phlox and wild canyon pea. New to the party of blossoms are chia, elderberry, red wild onion and the elegant Catalina mariposa lily. Before the Tunnel Road look for hillsides covered in poppies and lupine, and in the stretch just before the campground, the sky lupine is prolific and giving off a heavenly aroma. On rocky slopes with few grasses, poppies are growing strong with globe gilia and caterpillar phacelia. At the Davy Brown Trailhead there is a patch of chocolate lilies. Continuing down the road, find an abundance of bush lupine, goldfields and, along a rusty pipe fence, lots more chocolate lilies. Arriving at Ranger Peak, the baby blue eyes will be watching you from the shaded areas on both sides of the road. The road between Ranger Peak and Cachuma Peak is colored with all the flowers just mentioned, plus yellow and purple bush lupine and bush poppy. At Sunset Valley an Easter egg basket of color awaits with you with pink prickly phlox, goldfields, poppies, purple nightshade, chia, fiesta flowers and wild canyon pea. At Happy Canyon, look for tufted poppies, royal lupines, purple sage, red Indian paintbrush and golden yarrow. Stay on Happy Canyon road and it will deliver you back to Hwy 154 and Santa Ynez.

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The wildlife sanctuaries in the high desert region maintained by [Los Angeles County Department of Parks & Recreation](#) are beginning to fade; but one is just starting to bloom. If you haven't been to Devil's Punchbowl, then you might want to consider going this year. Devil's Punchbowl is a little jewel nestled in the north slope foothills and Pinyon-Juniper woodland of the San Gabriel Mountains. An incredible geology sets the scene for a show of lovely blooming plants. Look for Fremont's phacelia (*Phacelia fremontii*), white daisy tidy tips (*Layia glandulosa*), narrow-leaf goldenbush (*Ericameria linearifolia*) and Western wallflowers (*Erysimum capitatum*). There is more to come, it's early there at 4600 ft. elevation. **Alpine Butte Wildlife Sanctuary** is declining but still has areas of Bigelow's coreopsis (*Leptosyne bigelovii*) and goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*). Around the buttes are Wallace's woolly daisy (*Eriophyllum wallacei*), white-stem stickleaf (*Mentzelia albicaulis*), and broad-flowered gilia (*Gilia latiflora*), as well as an occasional desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), and in sandy pockets, dune evening primrose (*Oenothera deltoids*). **Jackrabbit Flat Wildlife Sanctuary** is starting to decline in bloom, but has still scattered patches of Bigelow's Coreopsis (*Leptosyne bigelovii*), goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*), Mojave sun cup (*Camissonia campestris*), and evening snow (*Linanthus dichotomus*). You can still enjoy lots of Parry's linanthus (*Linanthus parryae*) in large patches. Lacy Phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*) can be seen under the creosote bushes. Also found are white daisy tidy tips (*Layia glandulosa*), golden linanthus (*Leptosiphon aureus*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), lupines (*Lupinus* spp.) and purple owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*). **Theodore Payne Wildlife Sanctuary** has a good variety of flowers. The majority are Mojave sun cups (*Camissonia campestris*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), and broad-flowered gilia (*Gilia latiflora*) with nice patches of purple owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*), yellow peppergrass (*Lepidium flavum*) and Parry's linanthus (*Linanthus parryae*). Taking shelter under creosote bushes are lacy phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*). Also take in an occasional Wallace's woolly daisy (*Eriophyllum wallacei*), purple mat (*Nama demissa*), scale bud (*Anisocoma acaulis*), golden linanthus (*Leptosiphon aureus*) and sand verbena (*Abronia* sp.). **George Bones Wildlife Sanctuary** still has California goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*) and small patches of lacy phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*) and Bigelow's coreopsis (*Leptosyne bigelovii*). Occasional tidy tips (*Layia glandulosa*), strigose lotus (*Acmispon strigosus*) and pale yellow sun cup (*Camissoniopsis pallida*) can be seen as well. **Phacelia Wildlife Sanctuary** has large areas covered in goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*) and lacy phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*) underneath creosote bushes.

Poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are still in good abundance at [the Antelope Valley California State Poppy Reserve](#). Only the more exposed, warmer sites within the reserve are drying up, so what you are seeing now is a more patchy landscape. You can go on a treasure hunt along the trails to find the few WHITE poppies in the orange population. Goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*), cream cups (*Platystemon californicus*), pygmy leaf lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), desert parsley (*Lomatium nevadense*), blue dicks/wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) are also scattered about. Rising above the colorful yellow and orange "floor" are grape soda lupines (*Lupinus excubitus*) and lacy phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*). Silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*) are showing off their large puffy, silver seed heads indicating a finish to their bloom while owl's clover (*Castilleja* sp.) and fringed onion (*Allium frimbriatum*) are just starting to flower.





Visitors at the Antelope Valley California State Poppy Reserve. Photo by Mary Wilson

Just west of the poppy reserve is the scenic [Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland State Park](#). The female California Juniper (*Juniperus californica*) trees have pretty gray “berries.” (The fruits that look like berries actually are fleshy cones that when dry, are woody.) The Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*) still have the flowers and some are forming seedpods. Colorful wildflowers are starting to bloom throughout the park and include goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*), tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), linear-leaf goldenbush (*Ericameria linearifolius*), comb-bur (*Pectocarya* sp.), comet blazing star (*Mentzelia albicaulis*), blue sage (*Salvia dorii*), desert sun cups (*Camissonia palmeri*), Mojave sun cup (*Camissonia campestris*), bladder pod (*Peritoma arborea*), and rock cress (*Arabis pulchra*).



Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland State Park. Photo by Mary Wilson

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Scattered blooms are showing up in many areas of [Hungry Valley State Park](#). There is a huge, showy display of coreopsis (*Leptosyne* sp.) turning the hillsides yellow behind Lane Ranch Campground. If you come into the park at the south entrance, there are some wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) and goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.) beginning to bloom near the South Grove oaks. White daisy-like tidy tips (*Layia glandulosa*) and more goldfields are blooming in concentrated patches among the yuccas (*Yucca* sp.) between Lane Ranch and Aliklik Campgrounds. The cheerful yellow blossoms on goldenbush (*Ericameria linearifolia*) and bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*) brighten up the park's scenery, as well. There are hillsides flaunting the bright purple phacelia (*Phacelia minor*) like a signal flag in the north part of the park. Wild parsley (*Lomatium* sp.) is starting to show its lacy yellow flowers, and baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) have popped up along Spaghetti Pass. There is a turnout where Gorman Trail starts if you want to stop and admire this display. The Gorman Hills are getting quite colorful with large patches of yellow from the coreopsis. The golden-orange fiddleneck (*Amsinckia* sp.), purple lupine (*Lupinus* sp.) and phacelia are starting to add to their paint-by-number colors to the landscape. The masses of poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are just starting to show on the hills. Hungry Valley is an Off-Highway Vehicle state recreation park, so watch or motorized traffic like dirt bikes on the roads and trails. Please use turnouts to view flower displays. Park fees apply.

Temperatures are warming and for the most part and [Carrizo Plain National Monument](#) flowers have dried up on the valley floor. A few species are still in small patches along Seven Mile and Soda Lake road. We are starting to see later blooming species, such as snake's head (*Malacothrix coulteri*), but not in abundance. Some spots in the Temblor and Caliente Mountains at higher elevations still have flowers, but they are beginning to dry up, as well. It's close to the end of spring flower season at Carrizo Plain, but imagine all the seed set for next year! If you are still traveling there, remember that high clearance vehicles are recommended for Elkhorn Road and access to the Temblors. Much of the northern Temblors is private property. Make certain to avoid private property, have food and water for the day and a full tank of gas. The valley floor is home to sensitive species habitat, so be respectful please.

Many folks visit [Pinnacles National Park](#) in the Coast Ranges of Central California for the beautiful rock formations for which Pinnacles is named; or perhaps to get a glimpse of a California condor. The untamed landscape, however, harbors a diversity of habitats, both wet and dry. Seasonal blossoms include some pretty "wild" characters like tomcat clover (*Trifolium wildenovii*), blue witch (*Solanum umbelliferum*), warrior's plume (*Pedicularis densiflora*), buck brush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*), owl's clover (*Castilleja exerta*), purple mouse ears (*Diplacus douglasii*) and bitterroot (*Lewisia* sp.). Springing up for Spring are the perennial bulbs like yellow pretty face (*Tritelia lugens*), creamy Fremont's star lily (*Toxicoscordion fremontii*) and blue wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*). In the fields between piles of boulders, find patches of cream cups (*Platystemon californicus*), goldfields (*Lasthenia gracilis*), and baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*). In dry areas look for the small blue flowers of California

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gilia (*Gilia achilleifolia* ssp. *achilleifolia*), bright pink phlox (*Microsteris gracilis*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), sky lupine (*Lupinus nanus*) and California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). The showy yellow blossoms of bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*) can be found as beacons in the landscape. Another plant, the white tufted flowers of the pipestem (*Clematis lasiantha*) are often mistaken as flowering shrubs, but in fact are vines climbing over shrubs. Pretty showy.

The bloom along the Ecology Trail at [Placerita Canyon Nature Center](#) is gorgeous with California herbaceous and woody perennials. California peony (*Paeonia californica*), Miner's lettuce (*Claytonia* sp.), wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) Fremont's star lily (*Toxicoscordion fremontii*), hoary ceanothus (*Ceanothus crassifolius*), hairy ceanothus (*Ceanothus oliganthus*) are fading as black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) are coming on strong with their bloom. Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) has dangling flower catkins and pinkish new growth of branchlets should be noticed.

The trails and pathways around the "mesa" at [Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden](#) is a walk in floral paradise! The most awesome display is the swathes of Douglas iris and Pacific Coast iris hybrids (*Iris* spp. and cultivars). The waves of blues, purples and lavender are truly amazing. California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*) add to this lovely scene.

This next trail is for an experienced hiker and worth every upward step. There are many lovely things to be seen in bloom on the [Mt. Wilson Trail in the San Gabriel Mountains](#) and I'll categorize them into trees/shrubs, woody and herbaceous subshrubs and annuals. The annual wild flowers you'll spot along the trail include a trio of lupines, hairy lupine (*Lupinus hirsutissimus*), blunt-leaf lupine (*Lupinus truncatus*) and Coulter's lupine (*Lupinus sparsiflorus*). Other annuals in that blue/purple color range are baby blue-eyes (*Nemophila menziesii* var. *integrifolia*), wild Canterbury bells (*Phacelia minor*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*) and common phacelia (*Phacelia distans*). Complementing these hues are annuals in the yellow range and include yellow pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*), Western wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum* var. *capitatum*), California primrose (*Eulobus californicus*), small-flowered mentzelia (*Mentzelia micrantha*), common fiddleneck (*Amsinckia intermedia*), Coastal lotus (*Acmispon maritimus* var. *maritimus*), San Bernardino sun cup (*Camissoniopsis confusa*) and tufted poppy (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*). Finally, just because they are white, doesn't mean boring, these annuals sparkle along the trail: rabbit tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium biolettii*), California chicory (*Rafinesquia californica*), small-flowered meconella (*Meconella denticulata*), woodland star (*Lithophragma affine*), prickly cryptantha (*Cryptantha muricata*), Miner's lettuce (*Claytonia perfoliata* ssp. *mexicana*). Flowering perennials and subshrubs seen along the trail are wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis*), nightshade (*Solanum xanti*), blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum* var. *foliolosum*) and Douglas's nightshade (*Solanum douglasii*). Shrubs and trees form lovely, colorful background cover for the smaller plants. They include chaparral whitethorn (*Ceanothus leucodermis*), green bark ceanothus (*Ceanothus spinosus*), hairy-leaf ceanothus

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(*Ceanothus oliganthus* var. *oliganthus*), hoary-leaf ceanothus (*Ceanothus crassifolius*), California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), holly-leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia* ssp. *ilicifolia*), sugarbush (*Rhus ovata*) and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* var. *caerula*). Finally we should be lucky to have on this trail one of the rarest trees in SoCal, the wonderful madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*). Wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpa*), common Pacific pea (*Lathyrus vestitus* var. *vestitus*) and California morning glory (*Calystegia macrostegia* ssp. *arida*) can be found clambering over other plants along the trail as well.



Pacific Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*). Photo by Michael Charters

The California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) at the [Environmental Nature Center](#) are in bloom now and absolutely should not be missed if you desire a delightful experience in sight and sweet fragrance. The ceanothus (*Ceanothus* spp. and cvs..) are still looking gorgeous and blooming in multiple plant communities. California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and tansy-leaved phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*) accessorize the ceanothus and buckeyes. In the scrub communities, look for sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*), California encelia (*Encelia californica*) and black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) appearing with the coral-colored apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*). Walking through the Channel Islands plantings, look for the large lavender-purple flowers of Island mallow (*Lavatera assurgentiflora*) and creamy white floral sprays of the Catalina cherry (*Prunus illicifolia* ssp. *lyonii*). The majestic white sage is also beginning to flower. Check it out!

Finally coming back home to the [Theodore Payne Foundation](#), you will find its gardens continuing to bloom with California and tufted poppies (*Eschscholzia californica* and *E. caespitosa*). Other annuals showing off right now include thistle sage (*Salvia carduacea*), giant-flowered phacelia (*Phacelia grandiflora*), owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*) and loads of the primrose family members. Try to see them before they are all eaten by the white-lined sphinx moth caterpillars! Alas, farewell-to-spring blooms (*Clarkia* spp.) are starting to make their presence known, particularly wine cup clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*). Purple and black sage (*Salvia leucophylla* and *S. mellifera*) are flowering strong and attracting pollinators far and wide. Along the Wild Flower Hill trail, the varied blue and pink hues of showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*) are stop-in-your-tracks beautiful.

**Buy a NEW guide to wild flower locations** in Theodore Payne Foundation's online shop or in our store. This illustrated guide by Spencer Westbrook contains turn by turn

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directions to some of the most reliable sites in Southern California for viewing our wonderful flowers.

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup>**, and check back each week for the most up-to-date information on southern and central California wild flowers.

### **NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS:**

#### **Placerita Canyon Nature Center**

Wildflower hike at Placerita every 4th Saturday.

"Blooms of the Season" walk, 9:30 – 10:30

We always find something interesting to see.

**Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden** will have many activities during **Wildflower Week April 13-21, 2019:**

For details see: [www.rsabg.org/events-programs/wildflower-week](http://www.rsabg.org/events-programs/wildflower-week)

### **California Native Plant Society Chapters – Field Trips**

#### **San Gabriel Mountains Chapter**

**Saturday, April 20, 8:30am**

Saddleback Butte State Park, Antelope Valley

Fee: \$6/car [www.cnps-sgm.org/showevent.php?id=243&ty=2&ri=1](http://www.cnps-sgm.org/showevent.php?id=243&ty=2&ri=1)