March 13, 2020

Theodore Payne Foundation’s Wild Flower Hotline is made possible by donations, memberships and sponsors. Please support the Hotline today!

Theodore Payne Foundation celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. Watch our website, Facebook and Instagram pages for details on upcoming 60th events.

Southeast of the Monterey Bay and within the triangle of access towns of King City, Soledad and Hollister is Pinnacles National Park. The early spring is definitely the time to visit. Any trail within the park that you choose has lovely wild flowers scattered about. The checker lily, also called Mission lily (Fritillaria affinis), can be seen in shady areas. Shooting stars (Primula clevelandii var. patula) create impressive carpets of pink in woodlands and grassy areas. Among boulders and rocks, look for the bright red woolly paintbrush (Castilleja foliolosa), especially on the High Peaks and Condor trails. Look for the exquisite Mexican manzanita (Arctostaphlos pungens) along with a parasitic partner, warrior’s plume (Pedicularis densiflora), growing beneath. Other showy plants to see now are the yellow California buttercup (Ranunculus californicus), orange Douglas’ wallflower (Erysimum capitatum var. capitatum) and the pristine white milk maids (Cardamine californica).

Mexican manzanita (Arctostaphlos pungens), shooting stars (Primula clevelandii). Photos by Michael Charters

Visitors to **Carrizo Plain National Monument** are starting to see yellow flowers (yet to be identified) in the center of the Monument along Soda Lake Road and expecting a low to moderate bloom over the next several weeks. Between the KCL campground and Traver Ranch on Soda Lake road is the best area at this time. With recent rains, secondary roads may be rough or impassable, but main roads such as Soda Lake Road and Seven Mile road should be fine.

This season’s early rainfall resulted in a prolific germination event in the Sierra Foothill Woodland region east of Visalia and in Three Rivers. Wildflower seedlings are growing in abundance. However, if no further rainfall happens, the show may be short lived. Presently great masses of Eastwood’s fiddleneck (*Amsinckia eastwoodiae*) and rusty haired popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys nothofulvus*) cover many of the hillsides. Also making a nice display are miner’s lettuce (*Claytonia* sp.). red maids (*Calandrinia menziesii*), fringe pod (*Thysanocarpus* sp.); woodland poppies (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*) are beginning to bloom, as are silver bush lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*) and buck brush (*Ceanothus cuneatus* var. *cuneatus*). Everywhere, western redbuds (*Cercis occidentalis*) have their branches swathed in bright pink blossoms. The blue oaks (*Quercus douglasii*) are leafing out and mountain blue penstemon (*Penstemon laetus*), soap plant (*Chlorogalum* sp.), elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) and wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) are beginning to show color.

The dry winter stalled the bloom in the **Santa Monica Mountains**, but there are still flowers coming. The Stunt High Trail at Stunt Ranch begins along a creek and, in this area, there are milk maids (*Cardamine californica*) in bloom, as well as wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpa*), purple nightshade (*Solanum* sp.), California bay trees (*Umbellularia*).

californica) and miner's lettuce (Claytonia sp.). Hiking up into the meadow, there are a few wild hyacinth (Dichelostemma capitatum). In the chaparral, there is green bark ceanothus (Ceanothus spinosus), California everlasting (Pseudognaphalium californicum), California peony (Paeonia californica), Eastwood manzanita (Arctostaphylos glandulosa), fuchsia-flowering gooseberry (Ribes speciosum) and flowering ash trees (Fraxinus dipetela).

Before the annual wild flowers come into bloom, winter-flowering shrubs put on their show at Placerita Canyon Nature Center. Look for the currants and gooseberries—golden currant (Ribes aureum), chaparral currant (Ribes malvaceum) and fuchsia-flowering gooseberry (Ribes speciosum). Just follow the hummingbirds! The stately white-flowered hoary ceanothus (Ceanothus crassifolius) is everywhere on the trails. Look for the California peony (Paeonia californica), snowberry (Symphoricarpos sp.), nightshade (Solanum xantii), blue-eyed grass (Sisyrinchium bellum) and locoweed (Astragalus sp.), tucked in among the chaparral understory. The wild cucumber (Marah macrocarpa) is vining up the trees and shrubs trying to reach the sun. Along the stream, look for the cottony flowers of arroyo willow (Salix lasiolepis), and enjoy the scent of California sage brush (Artemisia californica) is stirred up if you brush past it.

There are many poppies (Eschscholzia californica) and other lovely desert wild flowers in bloom now at the Antelope Valley State Poppy Reserve. The warm weather has encouraged the poppies to open by mid-morning, but they hide their pretty faces in the late afternoon or if it’s cold and windy. Check the weather forecast before leaving. Don’t forget to note all the dainty white forget-me-nots too. Check out the Reserve’s NEW PoppyCam live-feed camera at their website. Please remember, visitors must stay on the official trails. Photos out in the flower fields are not allowed as that activity creates much damage.

LA County’s various Wildlife Sanctuaries in the High desert have mostly fiddleneck (Amsinckia sp.) blooming so far, but it’s still early in the season. This week, though, at the Theodore Payne Wildlife Sanctuary near Llano, a few small Bigelow’s coreopsis (Leptosyne bigelovii), Mojave suncup (Camissonia campestris), Fremont’s pincushion (Chaenactis fremontii) and brown-eyed primrose (Chylismia claviformis) have been seen. Perhaps this week’s showers will give the flowers the boost they need.

Spotted along the Whitewater Canyon Road entrance to the Whitewater Preserve, are many wishbone bush (Mirabilis sp.), as well as some stinging lupine (Lupinus hirsutissimus), common goldfields (Lasthenia sp.), wild Canterbury bells (Phacelia minor), Parish’s golden bush (Ericameria parishii var. parishii), narrow leaved forget me not (Cryptantha angustifolia), yellow suncup (Camissonia sp.), bristly fiddleneck (Amsinckia tessellata), and bladderpod (Peritoma arborea).

Joshua Tree National Park seems to be popping with the chartreuse yellow bladderpod (Peritoma arborea) everywhere. Enjoy the colorful combos, too, of the electric blue chia sage (Salvia columbariae), golden Parish’s poppy (Eschscholzia parishii), pink desert five-spot (Eremalche rotundifolia) and yellow desert dandelion (Malacothrix glabrata), growing alongside the bladderpod.

Around Fallbrook along SR76, the natives have been popping in glorious bloom over the last week. The colorful roadside scene includes tons of goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp) and Arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*). Goldfields are also widespread in the landscape at Lake Henshaw.

Easy to reach and confirmed flower locations in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, include washes and drainages just east of Glorietta Canyon and Yaqui Meadows. The bloom is normal but not a super bloom. Hiking Glorietta Canyon is NOT so easy, but you will be rewarded with desert five spot (*Eremalche rotundifolia*), sand blazing star (*Mentzelia involucrata*), Bigelow’s monkeyflower (*Diplacus bigelovii*), desert star (*Monoptilon belliiodes*), beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basiliaris*), California barrel cactus (*Ferocactus cylindraceus*), fagonia (*Fagonia laevis*), purple mat (*Nama demissum*), Emory’s rock daisy (*Perityle emoryi*), whispering bells (*Emmenantha penduliflora*), Arizona lupine (*Lupinus arizonicus*), Wallace’s woolly daisy (*Eriophyllum wallacei*), fish hook cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*), climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides var. hartwegii*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), ragged rockflower (*Crossosoma bigelovii*) and wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis var. retrorsa*).

Along State Hwy 3 in Borrego Springs, large fields of desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), pincushion (*Chaenactis* sp.) and lupines (*Lupinus arizonicus*) can be seen.

Alma Wash a.k.a. Elephant Tree Natural Area is above normal bloom, as are washes to the north. You need to get out and walk the area however. Also at least three side canyons of Carrizo Creek are loaded with five spots (*Eremalche rotundifolia*) on the south-facing slopes. One location of five spots is close to State Hwy 2. Along Carrizo Creek wash at the State Highway-2 crossing, there are some fun little belly flowers—Bigelow’s monkeyflower (*Mimulus bigelovii*), desert star (*Monoptilon belliiodes*), Wallace’s woolly daisy (*Eriophyllum wallacei*), purple mat (*Nama demissum*) and sand blazing star (*Mentzelia involucrata*).
The Habitat Gardens at Elizabeth Learning Center are outdoor ecological learning spaces where the students of AP Environmental Science and Biology have endeavored to rewild neglected areas of campus with native flora and fauna! Most of their wild flower show can be seen from the sidewalk on Elizabeth Street in front of the campus without having to check in at the Main Office!

Explore the Desert Habitat Garden to find cream cups (*Platystemon californicus*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), brown-eyed primrose (*Chylismia claviformis ssp. claviformis*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), catsclaw (*Senegalia greggii*), desert lavender (*Condea emoryi*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), Spanish needle (*Palafoxia arida*), cryptantha (*Cryptantha sp.*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), fish hook cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*), skeleton milkweed (*Asclepias subulata*), brittle bush (*Encelia farinosa*), blue bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), woolly sunflower (*Ericophyllum ambiguum*), Arizona four nerve daisy (*Tetraneuris acaulis var. arizonica*), miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), and Coulter’s lupine (*Lupinus sparsiflorus*).

![Silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*) flower and seed. Photo by George Nanoski](image)

For vernal pool aficionados, the Vernal Pool Habitat Garden is a special place! Look here for calico monkeyflower (*Diplacus pictus*), Menzies’ fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), truncate-leafed lupine (*Lupinus truncata*), miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), Arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), goldfields (*Lasthenia glabrata*), Douglas’ meadowfoam (*Limnanthes douglasii*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), Otay mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), and blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*).
Some additional species in the Chaparral Habitat Garden include woolly Indian paintbrush (Castilleja foliolosa), miner’s lettuce (Claytonia perfoliata), Stebbin’s morning glory (Calystegia stebbinsii), Apache plume (Fallugia paradoxa), black sage (Salvia mellifera), pink fairy duster (Calliandra eriophylla), torhleaf goldeneye (Viguiera laciniata), sugar bush (Rhus ovata), Santa Cruz Island buckwheat (Eriogonum arborescens), giant coreopsis (Leptosyne gigantea), Channel Island tree poppy (Dendromecon harfordii), Nevin’s barberry (Berberis nevinii), and blue paloverde (Parkinsonia florida).

Elizabeth Learning Center is located off Elizabeth Street between Atlantic and Wilcox Avenues in Cudahy. Please email George Nanoski, the Habitat Gardens Coordinator at gtn5586@lausd.net for further inquiries.

While planning what plants to purchase at the Poppy Day Plant Sale beginning next Saturday, check out what’s blooming in Theodore Payne’s Foundation’s gardens. The dry winter accounts for a poor bloom of annuals, but perennials and native shrubs are doing just fine, thanks! In the hills around TPF, the California bush sunflower (Encelia californica) is going strong with their profuse cheery, yellow flowers. The pink four o’ clock (Mirabilis laevis var. crassifolia) and a smattering of wild hyacinth (Dichelostemma capitatum) can be seen as well. Many other perennials blooming in and around the garden and hills include monkey flower (Diplacus spp. & cultivars), nightshade (Solanum sp.), woolly blue curls (Trichostema lanatum), and some early sages (Salvia spp. & cultivars). The real stunners are the California lilacs (Ceanothus spp. & cultivars), which are at peak bloom now. Several blue to purple flowering ceanothus include Ceanothus cultivars ‘Concha’, ‘Joyce Coulter’, ‘Valley Violet’, and ‘Powder Blue.’
That’s it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, March 20** and check back each week for the most up to date information on southland central California wild flowers.

**NATIVE PLANT AND WILD FLOWER EVENTS**

**THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION**

**POPPY DAY SPRING PLANT SALE**

Poppy Day sale **discounts have been extended** from the original Poppy Day (Saturday, March 21, 8:30am-4:30pm) to include four additional days (Tuesday-Friday, March 24-27, 8:30-4:30pm). If you are concerned about crowds, we recommend shopping on these additional days.

Discounts to all on plants, seed, and TPF gear!
TPF Members: 15% off; Non-members: 10% off. **PLUS** 20% discount to all on 4” California poppies and other spring annuals. Shop early for best selection!

**2020 THEODORE PAYNE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN TOUR**

Saturday & Sunday, March 28 & 29, 10:00am-5:00pm. A two-day, self-guided journey through the Los Angeles region’s most beautiful and inspiring private and public landscapes. Forty-two gardens, including 21 new to the tour. Details, photos, and tickets at [nativeplantgardentour.org](http://nativeplantgardentour.org).

**CNPS - SAN DIEGO CHAPTER**

**ARTFUL CALIFORNIA NATIVE GARDEN TOUR** Saturday, April 4, 9:00am-4:00pm. The tour will highlight artists in select gardens and focus on the inland native gardens of San Diego East County. Details and tickets at [https://www.cnps.org/event/2020-sd-garden-tour](https://www.cnps.org/event/2020-sd-garden-tour).

CNPS – ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER

CALIFORNIA IN MY GARDEN Saturday, April 18 A free, self-guided tour of nine private gardens and one public garden in west central Orange County, featuring landscapes with more than 50% native plantings, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Docents will be available to answer questions about native plants. The best place to start is at the Golden West College Native Garden, 15744 Goldenwest St. in Huntington Beach. Tour goers should park at the Gothard Street parking lot on the east side of campus to avoid the swap-meet crowd on the west side. (Parking is free during the tour.) Register online next week to get a copy of the tour map. occnps.org