March 20, 2020

Theodore Payne Foundation’s Wild Flower Hotline is made possible by donations, memberships, and sponsors. You can support TPF by shopping the online gift store, as well. And a new contact-free, plant pick-up system is available. Details here.

Out of caution, Theodore Payne Foundation is temporarily closed to the public. When we emerge at the other side of this national crisis, we will bring our TPF community and supporters back together to celebrate our strength and resilience.

Visitor Centers and campgrounds at National, State and County parks and reserves are closed, and public programs cancelled. That said, most still have their trails open for walking and hiking. They do remind that, if you encounter others on the trail, please practice social distancing precautions. Situations change quickly, so it is advised that you check on their websites before venturing out. A list of some web links appears at the end of this report.

Early bloomers in the Sierra Foothill Woodland region east of Visalia and in Three Rivers include Eastwood’s fiddleneck (Amsinckia eastwoodii), rusty popcorn flower (Plagiobothrys nothofulvus), silver leaf bush lupine (Lupinus albifrons), buck brush (Ceanothus cuneatus), red maids (Calandrinia ciliata), miner’s lettuce (Claytonia perfoliata), and fringe pod (Thysanocarpus curvipes) continue to bloom along the Foothill Woodland trails and roads. Coming into peak bloom are Western redbud (Cercis occidentalis), miniature lupine (Lupinus bicolor), and Johnny tuck or butter ‘n’ eggs (Triphysaria eriantha). Starting to show color are wild hyacinth (Dichelostemma capitatum), Eastwood’s baby blue eyes (Nemophila pulchella), baby blue eyes (Nemophila menziesii), hillside woodland star (Lithophragma heterophyllum), caraway-leaved lomatium (Lomatium caruifolium), Western hound’s tongue (Cynoglossum grande), Henderson’s shooting star (Dodecatheon hendersonii), and foothill poppy (Eschscholzia caespitosa).

Placerita Canyon Nature Center has trails with blooms waiting to soothe your senses. The recent rain has brought out flowers and refreshed the California lilac (Ceanothus spp.), wild peony (*Paeonia californica*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos* sp.), wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpa*), chaparral currant (*Ribes malvaceum*), golden currant (*Ribes aureum*), and blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*). The oak trees (*Quercus* sp.) are flowering along the path adjacent to the gurgling stream.

There are many poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and other lovely desert wild flowers in bloom now at the Antelope Valley State Poppy Reserve. The wet weather has encouraged the poppies to grow to a glorious field of orange. 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. Check the weather forecast before leaving, as well.

The trails and outdoor amenities at Devil’s Punchbowl are still open sunrise to sunset, as are the Wildlife Sanctuaries in the High Desert. There are definitely some flowers worth getting out and searching for. At Jackrabbit Flat this week, there were California goldfields (Lasthenia californica), Davy gilia (Gilia latiflora ssp. davyi), desert dandelion (Malacothrix glabrata), lacy phacelia (Phacelia tanacetifolia), Mojave suncup (Camissonia campestris), Bigelow’s coreopsis (Leptosyne bigelovii), and white tidy tips (Layia glandulosa). There are not large fields of these flowers like in previous years, but enough to satisfy.

Bigelow’s coreopsis (Leptosyne bigelovii), and white tidy tips (Layia glandulosa).

Photos by Michael Charters

In the Trancus-Zuma Canyon region of the Santa Monica Mountains, enjoy the lush wildflower diversity along the Newton Canyon trail. The first 100 yards have much to see. This is the second season after the Woolsey Fire, and the bloom will not disappoint any wildflower enthusiast. The canyon sunflower (Venegasia carpesioides) is getting ready to bloom and the plants are over 5 ft tall. The scent of green bark ceanothus (Ceanothus spinosus) and California everlasting (Pseudognaphalium californicum) wafts through the air, while blue larkspur (Delphinium sp.), hummingbird sage (Salvia spathacea), tufted poppy (Eschscholzia caespitosa) and virgin's bower (Clematis ligusticifolia) flash their
bright colors around the landscape. The trailhead is on Kanan-Dume Road and Newton Canyon Road.

At the Environmental Nature Center in Newport Beach, the pathways invite you to forget the stress and enjoy the colors of spring. California lilac is flowering in shades of blue everywhere. Gold Indian mallow (Abutilon palmeri), apricot mallow (Sphaeralcea ambigua), orange California poppies (Eschscholzia californica), yellow brittlebush (Encelia farinosa), and lavender Cleveland sage (Salvia clevelandii) are waiting for your appreciative glances.

If you find yourself trapped in the metro LA area, take a short trip to Cudahy to view the display of desert and vernal pool wild flowers at the Elizabeth Learning Center. The school is closed, of course, but most of the wild flower show can be seen from the sidewalk on Elizabeth Street in front of the campus. Play the game of counting how many species you can identify! Look for cream cups (Platystemon californicus), desert marigold (Baileya multiradiata), showy penstemon (Penstemon spectabilis), blue bells (Phacelia campanularia), and desert lavender (Condea emoryi) in the Desert Garden. Continue the search for calico monkeyflower (Diplacus p pictus), fiddleneck (Amsinckia menziesii), lupines

(Lupinus spp.), chia (Salvia columbariae), goldfields (Lasthenia glabrata), and meadowfoam (Limnanthes douglasii) in the Vernal Pool Garden.

Don’t want to get on a plane or train, but a car will get you far away to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park? A few days ago, a visitor had a wonderful time surveying Jojoba Wash and part of the Volcanic Hills just off State Highway 2, near the southern end of the Park. It is in peak bloom there, with many delightful plants. The bold and glamorous desert five-spot (Eremalche rotundifolia), desert lily, sand blazing star (Mentzelia involucrata) and beavertail cactus (Opuntia basilaris) are all in bloom. The area is also populated with little jewels, such as little gold poppy (Eschscholzia minutiflora), desert calico (Loeseliastrum matthewsii), thread stem (Nemacladus sp., Bigelow’s monkeyflower (Diplacus bigelovii), and desert forget-me-nots (Cryptantha spp.). The barrel (Ferocactus cylindraceus), fish hook (Mammillaria dioica), hedgehog (Echinocereus engelmannii) and cholla (Cylindropuntia spp.) cacti also have colorful blossoms.
That's it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, March 27**, and check back each week for the most up-to-date information on Southern and Central California wild flowers.

**Below is a short list of web links for local parks for access for information on current conditions.**

- [Anza-Borrego Desert State Park](#)
- [Santa Monica Mountains](#)
- [Antelope Valley State Poppy Reserve](#)
- [Joshua Tree National Park](#)
- [Carrizo Plain National Monument](#)
- [Death Valley National Park](#)
- [LA County Parks](#)

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**NATIVE PLANT AND WILD FLOWER EVENTS**

THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION

For the sake of everyone’s health and safety, Theodore Payne Foundation is temporarily closed to the public. The Foundation now offers a contact-free, drive-through plant order system. A silver lining to this crisis is that you’ll be able to support TPF – and spend extra time and find respite in your native plant garden.

**POPPY DAY SPRING PLANT SALE** Cancelled

**2020 THEODORE PAYNE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN TOUR** Saturday & Sunday, March 28 & 29, 10:00am-5:00pm. Due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus), the 2020 Theodore Payne Native Plant Garden Tour will be a virtual/online journey through the Los Angeles region's most beautiful and inspiring landscapes. Forty-two gardens, including 21 new to the tour. Details, photos, and tickets at [nativeplantgardentour.org](http://nativeplantgardentour.org).