



Wildflower Hotline

Every Weekend March through May

(818) 768-3533

Welcome to the **31st Annual Wildflower Hotline** brought to you by the Theodore Payne Foundation, a non-profit plant nursery, seed source, book store and education center dedicated to the preservation of wildflowers and California native plants. This a report for **April 19, 2013**. New reports will be posted each Friday through the end of May.

As California Native Plant Week fades this weekend, so are the wildflowers in many areas of southern California. The bloom has been short in the low elevation foothills and valleys. Higher elevations may still have something to offer in the next few weeks. Many public gardens are having special events, and CNPS chapters are sponsoring hikes into Southern California's most popular native habitats. Please get out to explore wildflower hotspots as Native Plant Week winds down.

In the Southern Sierra near [Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks](#), and along the Generals Highway in Sequoia National Park, Western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*) is spectacular with it's reddish-pink blossoms providing a stunning show of color. This is above 2500 feet in elevation. Bright patches California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and common madia (*Madia elegans*) light up the road sides along Highway 198 through Three Rivers into the national parks. The blue spider lupine (*Lupinus benthamii*) and pinkish Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*) add contrast to the yellow/orange palette of the other blossoms. Monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) are coming into bloom around Kaweah Reservoir in lower elevations. This is a beautiful stretch of highway into our uniquely beautiful national parks in California's Sierras Nevada Mountains.



Western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*). Photo by Michael Charters

[Figueroa Mountain](#) in Santa Barbara County still has nice displays of wildflower species, but fading, so get up there soon. On north facing slopes and in shady areas under tree canopies, the buttercups (*Ranunculus* sp.), and hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathaceae*) are still outstanding. Sky lupine (*Lupinus nanus*) and California poppies can still be found along the roadsides. Look for bright pink prickly phlox (*Leptodactylon californicum*) on the serpentine slopes. Wildflowers that dot the surrounding landscape include (*Lasthenia gracilis*), coreopsis (*Leptosyne* sp.), and miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*). Beyond the station, bush lupine (*Lupinus* sp.) are exploding in both color and fragrance—a treat for the senses. At the Davy Brown Trailhead, phacelias (*Phacelia* spp.), poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and sky lupine (*Lupinus nanus*) are inviting you to hike the trail. Happy Canyon, just beyond the campground, you will see the vibrant, red-orange Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.) and yellow bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*) adorning the rocky hillsides. Finally, yellow coreopsis (*Leptosyne* sp.), and bush lupine (*Lupinus* sp.) herald the end of your road trip.

The [Santa Barbara Botanic Garden](#) continues to offer spectacular displays of wildflowers, many in peak bloom. The Meadow Section loop trail offers colorful masses of California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), Point Reyes meadowfoam (*Limnanthes douglasii* var. *sulfurea*), Island bush poppy (*Dendromecon harfordii*), tree anemone (*Carpenteria californica*), and purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*). Plants currently flowering in the Desert Section include fairy-duster (*Calliandra eriophylla*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), desert lavender (*Hyptis emoryi*), and several species of penstemon (*Penstemon* spp.), desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), and prickly pears (*Opuntia* spp.). A special treat—masses of stream orchid (*Epipactis gigantea*) can be found in the Orchid display, whose border is currently framed by island alumroot (*Heuchera maxima*) and hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*). The canyon sunflower (*Venegasia carpesioides*) is in full bloom throughout the canyon below the picturesque and historic Mission Dam, where wild ginger (*Asarum caudatum*) and redwood sorrel (*Oxalis oregana*) are showing their first few flowers beneath the redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*).



Stream Orchid (*Epipactis gigantea*). Photo by Michael Charters

California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are dotting the hillsides with bright orange and gold at [Hungry Valley SRVA](#) near Gorman. The red paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.) stand out like red flames among the poppy orange. The yellow desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*) and a scattering of tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*) and baby blue-eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) are still hanging out along with Davy's gilia (*Gilia* sp.) on the hillsides along Stipa trail. In the grasslands area and along Powerline Road, the bush lupine (*Lupinus* sp.) is still outstanding, and soon to be joined by the yuccas (*Yucca schidigera*) which will be showing there great white spikes of blossoms soon.



**Poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and lupines (*Lupinus* sp.) at Hungry Valley SRA.
Photo by Lora Owens.**

In La Cañada-Flintridge, at [Descanso Gardens](#), the yellow flowers of bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*) are mixing it up with the neon blue-purple of foothill penstemon (*Penstemon heterophyllus*), coral blossoms of desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), and lilac verbena (*Verbena lilacena*). Throughout the garden, showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*) and Douglas's iris (*Iris douglasiana*) can be seen. California bluebells (*Phacelia campanularia*), Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and lace-leaved phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*) have escaped the Wildflower Patch and decorate the Native Plant Garden and beyond.

On the Palos Verdes Peninsula at [South Coast Botanic Garden](#), many California natives reside in the warm and sunny Mediterranean Garden. The perennial sages (*Salvia* spp.), conejo buckwheat (*Eriogonum crocatum*), bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), and lilac verbena (*Verbena lilacina*) provide a colorful frame for the California blue and gold of California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) and blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*).

Cobwebby thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*) and showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*) are outstanding as well.

Take a nice Sunday hike at one of the Los Angeles area's premier nature centers at [Eaton Canyon](#) in Pasadena. Along the lower canyon trails, look for coast brittlebush (*Encelia californica*), phacelia (*Phacelia* sp.), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) and the bright and cheery California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). Enjoy the area around the Nature Center as well. The demonstration garden displays pitcher sage (*Lepechinia fragrans*), penstemon (*Penstemon* sp.), monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) and wishbone bush (*Mirabilis californica*).

The blue-lavender shades of Pacific coast irises at [Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden](#) are in full glory on the mesa trails. Near the entrance, California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), and woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanata*) cheerfully welcome visitors; and throughout the garden, visitors will enjoy the orange and blue colors of monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) and showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*).

The habitat gardens at [Elizabeth Learning Center](#) in Cudahy still have nice displays of flowers including goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.), owls clover (*Castilleja* sp.), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), thistle sage (*Salvia carduacea*), Canterbury bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), desert gold poppy (*Eschscholzia parishii*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), desert lavender (*Hyptis emoryi*), and desert brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*). For the cactus aficionados, the beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*) is showing off its fuchsia pink blossoms. The central habitat garden is host to many of California's rare plant species. The San Clemente Island brodiaea (*Brodiaea kinkienis*), the Santa Rosa Island white felted paintbrush (*Castilleja lanata* ssp. *hololeuca*), Farnsworth's jewelflower (*Streptanthus farnsworthianus*), San Diego sunflower (*Hulsea californica*) are feeling secure to show off in this garden. Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*), prickly poppy (*Argemone* sp.), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) and cobwebby thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*) can be enjoyed as well. Visitors are welcome to visit the campus and enjoy the flowers from 8:00am to 4:00pm Monday thru Friday. Visitor passes from the Main Office. The school is located in Cudahy on Elizabeth Street between Atlantic Blvd and Wilcox Ave.

There is a "sage extravaganza" going on at the [Environmental Nature Center](#) in Newport Beach. Purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), Munz's sage (*Salvia munzii*), and hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*) are in full bloom. Their fragrant cousin, woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) is also contributing to the sweet fragrance. Enjoy the heady aroma as you stroll along the pathways. Deep blue-purple of blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*) and purple nightshade (*Solanum xantii*), contrast nicely with the cheery yellow blossoms of California encelia (*Encelia californica*) and its relative, desert encelia (*Encelia farinosa*). The lavender seaside daisy (*Erigeron glaucus*), golden flowered Indian mallow (*Abutilon palmeri*) and flannel bush (*Fremontodendron* spp.) fill in the "paint-by-number" garden palette. Check out too, the rare and beautiful Baja desert rose (*Rosa minutiflora*) with its prickly branches covered with a bright lime green foliage and pretty pink rose blossoms with yellow centers.

Enjoy the spring breezes as you hike the trails at [Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve](#). Approaching the Reserve along Clinton Keith Road, the bush monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) is especially showy. The Western buttercups (*Ranunculus occidentalis*) are glorious along the South Trans Preserve Trail. California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), goldfields (*Lasthenia gracilis*), baby-blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) and balloon clover (*Trifolium depauperatum* var. *truncatum*) also can be seen along trail edges. The bush lupines (*Lupinus excubitus* var. *hallii*), Canterbury bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), Angel's gilia (*Gilia angelensis*), and popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys* and *Cryptantha* spp.) show up here and there along the trails with the everlastings (*Pseudognaphalium* spp.) standing tall among them. Search here for another baby blue-eyes species, (*Nemophila pedunculata*) to add to your list of pretties. The SRP has many **fragile** soils, lichens and plants. Please stay on the trails to take pictures of flowers.

In San Diego County, the area just east of Poway that includes Iron Mountain, Mt. Woodson and the [Blue Sky Ecological Reserve](#), is now in full bloom. This is a canyon of large oaks with coastal sage scrub and chaparral filling in adjacent areas. The star of the show here is the snowdrop bush (*Styrax redivivus*) with its pure white flowers lighting up the shady understory. Bush monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), with all shades from yellow to deep red, and saniculas (*Sanicula* spp.) with their tight heads of tiny yellow flowers are very photoworthy. Out in the sunlight, golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*) is beginning its bloom. Slender sunflower (*Helianthus gracilentus*), canyon sunflower (*Venegasia capesioides*), stinging lupine (*Lupinus hirsutissimus*), caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria* var. *hispida*), Parry's phacelia (*Phacelia parryi*), Parish's bluecurls (*Trichostema parishii*), checkerbloom (*Sidalcea malviflora* ssp. *sparsiflora*), bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*) and the cute little pink Turkish rugging (*Chorizanthe staticoides*) are all in full bloom.

Turkish rugging (*Chorizanthe staticoides*) & snowdrop bush (*Styrax redivivus*).
Photos by Michael Charters



The much-talked-about desert yuccas in [Joshua Tree National Park](#)—Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*) and Mojave yucca (*Yucca schidigera*) are now in fruit, but still beautiful. The wildflower bloom that started in the south end of the park is slowly moving north. The bloom everywhere is sparse, but you can find flowers if you look for them. The bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), Chuparosa (*Justicia californica*), and creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) make up the perennial backbone of color in the Park. Canterbury bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), forget-me-nots (*Cryptantha* spp.), golden suncup (*Chylismia brevipes*), Wallace's woolly daisy (*Eriophyllum wallacei*) and Parish's poppy (*Eschscholzia parishii*) and chia (*Salvia columbariae*) dot the landscape in places, mostly in washes. The Mojave mound cactus (*Echinocereus triglochidiatus*) is blooming in several places, but look for it especially in Queen Valley,

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, April 26** and check back each week for the most up to date information on southern and central California wildflowers.

If you would like to be a wildflower reporter send your information about wildflower blooms and their location to flowerhotline@theodorepayne.org by Wednesday of each week when blooms of note occur.

NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS:

Theodore Payne Foundation

Saturday, April 20: Native Plant Week Symposium, Wildflower Show & Plant Sale. For more information visit our [webpage](#).

Huntington Library

When They Were Wild: Recapturing California's Wildflower Heritage

March 9 – June 10, 2013

Mary Lou and George Boone Gallery

A collaborative project of The Huntington, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, and the Theodore Payne Foundation for Wildflowers and Native Plants. For more information, go to [The Huntington](#)

Three Rivers Hidden Garden Tour

Saturday, April 20: Go to [Trus Foundation](#) website for more information.

Blue Sky Ecological Reserve

Blue Sky's Flora and Fauna hike. Sunday, April 21 - 9:00 a.m.

Explore the animals and plants of Blue Sky's habitats on a fun hike with a naturalist.

Saturday, April 27 - 9:00 a.m.

Hike and explore with a naturalist and discover the Reserve's early wildflower display.

[Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden](#)

Garden Tours

Weekends, March 23 through June 9, 1 p.m.

Guided walking tours with Garden nature interpreters featuring beautiful California wildflowers and seasonal highlights. Free with standard Garden admission.

California Native Plant Society Chapters

[CNPS – San Gabriel Mountains Chapter](#)

Saturday, April 20, 9:00 am: Hike in Monrovia Wilderness. Go to [CNPS-SGM](#) newsletter for information.

[CNPS – Orange County Chapter](#)

Field Trip: **April 20, Saturday, 8:00 am.** Donna & Richard O'Neil Land Conservancy, San Juan Capistrano. **Trip requires advance registration.** Go to [OCCNPS Field Trips](#) for more information.