



May 18, 2018

The weather has been mild, so we may be able to eek out a couple more weeks of good wild flower viewing.

Let's begin this week with our garden of origin. No, not the Garden of Eden, but the Garden at the [Theodore Payne Foundation](#) in Sun Valley. No tempting apples here, but many spectacular and enticing annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees. Walking to your destination after parking, you will see many beauties that will be "must-haves" for your home garden. By the East parking area steps, find the fragrant jewels of Cleveland sage, (*Salvia clevelandii*) and Payne's tree lupine (*Lupinus paynei*) standing among the white pearls of California everlasting (*Pseudognaphalium californicum*) and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*). Under the stately oak by the south parking area, the red buckwheat (*Eriogonum grande* var. *rubescens*) is waving its pink-red flower stalks for you to come and take a look. Around the La Fetra Nature Education Center and Gardens, the bold display of Britton's dudleya (*Dudleya brittonii*) and white sage (*Salvia apiana*) will have you "oh-oh-ing" and "ah-ah-ing" and nearby, *Salvia clevelandii* cultivars, elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unquiculata*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), Confetti hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea* 'Confetti'), Island bush poppy (*Dendromecon harfordii*), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) and showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*) glow in the sunlight. On a ridge, you'll find a lovely small grove of yellow-flowering blue palo verde (*Parkinsonia florida*).



Cleveland sage cultivars and showy penstemon at the Theodore Payne Foundation.

By the North parking lot, the ultimate in bold flowers—the Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*)— accompanies cheerful *Helianthus annuus* (common sunflower), California bush

sunflower (*Encelia californica*) and red fairy duster (*Calliandra californica*). Just inside the nursery gate, walk along the Sales Yard road, and take in the sweet smell of Western mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*). It's heavenly! Around the Horticulture Building, look for purple owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*), goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*), Anacapa Pink Island morning glory (*Calystegia macrostegia* 'Anacapa Pink'), and more hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*). At the foot of Wild Flower Hill look for the California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), wine cup clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*), silver bush lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*), Arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), *Camissoniopsis cheiranthifolia* (beach evening primrose), Indian pink (*Silene laciniata*), wallflower (*Erysimum* sp.), and purple needle grass (*Stipa pulchra*) laze around in the sun. You can enjoy this experience Tuesdays through Saturdays. Admission is free, and kids and friendly on-leash dogs are welcome!

There are reports that the Southern Sierra Nevada near Three Rivers, Sequoia and Kings Canyon is bountiful with displays of yellow elegant madia (*Madia elegans*), spider lupine (*Lupinus benthamii*), flannel bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*) and California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), just to name a few.

The [Bureau of Land Management](#)'s Scenic Byway, which goes between HWY178 and the summit of Ninemile Canyon, is currently having a large display in the burn areas from the 2016 Chimney Fire. The Road is passable with 2WD and good tires. There are large displays of coreopsis (*Leptosyne* sp.), gilia (*Gilia* spp.), white tidy tips (*Layia glandulosa*), grape soda lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*) and many phacelia (*Phacelia* spp.), and all at road level. It is suggested driving the route from North to South for the best views.

At [Hungry Valley SRVA](#), some of the best wildflowers can be seen by driving along the main roads of the park. There are still scattered poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) throughout, especially in the grasslands area and near Edison Campground. The purple lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*) and yellow sunflower-like balsam root (*Balsamorhiza* sp.) are blooming along Spaghetti Pass and giving some color to the arid landscape. The scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) near the entrance of Smith Forks is adding a bright red splash to the landscape. There is a variety of wildflowers down in the Yucca Flats area between Aliklik Campground and Lane Ranch Campground. Wander around this area for some amazing photo opportunities.



Yerba santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*) and Mariposa lily (*Calochortus kennedyi*).
Photos by Margaret Hurley.

The Mariposa lily (*Calochortus kennedyi*) was spotted this week blooming in the Yucca Flats area. The beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*) is also in full bloom in many areas of

the park. The prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*) can also be seen in a few place. Look for the big flower that looks like a fried egg! Some of the most spectacular flowers are on the yucca plants (*Yucca schidigera* and *Hesperoyucca whipplei*). There are still plenty of yucca budding, so the blooms will continue for a few weeks. Some of the larger native shrubs are also in bloom. Look for the pale purple flowers on the yerba santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*) and the white flowers on the elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*). Wildflower loops are two-wheel drive dirt roads, but you will need high clearance. Take advantage of turnouts, and be alert for OHVs on the narrow roads. Watch for rattlesnakes. All plants (and animals) are protected at Hungry Valley, so be respectful of our flora and fauna. Download the wildflower map from their website.

Stunt High Trail at [Stunt Ranch/Cold Creek Preserve in the Santa Monica Mountains](#), is a trail that has wonderful wild flower displays. The trail immediately goes down alongside a creek where there are stream orchids (*Epipactis gigantea*). Also in this riparian area there are purple nightshade (*Solanium* sp.), canyon sunflower (*Venegasia carpesioides*), greenbark ceanothus (*Ceanothus spinosus*), fiesta flower (*Philostoma auritum*) and most exciting, fairy lanterns or globe lilies (*Calochortus albus*). Just watch out for the poison oak which is abundant. The trail then goes uphill into some grasslands where there is an astonishing array of Catalina mariposa lilies (*Calochortus catalinae*), lupines (*Lupinus* spp.), blue eyed grass (*Sisyrichium bellum*), golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*) and blue larkspur (*Delphinium parishii*). Continuing further you get into chaparral where there is blooming sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), sticky monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) and woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*). This is a very satisfying hike and since the weather has been mild, it should still be nice hike. But go soon. The trail is off of Stunt Road and is reached from Mulholland. Turn south onto Stunt Rd. and drive one mile to the dirt parking area on the right that is defined by telephone poles on the ground. There is no sign. The trail begins at the uphill end of the parking lot.



Stream orchid (*Epipactis gigantea*). Photo by Dorothy Steinicke

At [Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont](#), a 6' tall scarlet larkspur (*Delphinium cardinale*) greets visitors just south of the entrance gate. Parry's larkspur (*Delphinium parryi*), also there, blooms in deep blue-purple. Favorite flowers to enjoy anytime you go, are the many aromatic sages (*Salvia* spp. and cultivars), monkeyflowers (*Mimulus* spp. and cultivars) in shades of yellow, orange, red, and white, and palo verde trees (*Parkinsonia florida*) with their entire green-barked branches engulfed in yellow flowers. The joyful sunflower species are many, and include coast bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), slender sunflower (*Helianthus gracilentus*), canyon sunflower (*Venegasia carpesioides*), goldeneye (*Bahiopsis laciniata*), and desert marigold (*Baileya multiradata*). Tucked away along shady pathways are red columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*) and the very rare bush anemone (*Carpenteria californica*), with its large white blossoms. Some of the stands of Matajila poppy (*Romneya coulteri*) are blooming, others not in bud yet so more to come. Showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*) is prolific throughout the garden. Others blooming are woolly bluestar (*Amsonia tomentosa*), Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), *Opuntias* and *Cylindropuntias* (cacti) in reds and yellows, as well as the spectacular 15' chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*).

In the [San Jacinto Mountains near Garner Valley](#), the only species making decent displays are on the Pacific Crest Trail. They include Davidson's phacelia (*Phacelia davidsonii*), wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum*), the gorgeous pink Pringle manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pringlei*), cupped-leaf ceanothus (*Ceanothus perplexans*), and Southern mountain phlox (*Phlox austromontana*). To see all this beauty, takes a 2.3 mile hike with 1325 feet of elevation gain to get to the PCT, but flowers and scenery are worth it.

If you are in the Newport Beach area, [The Environmental Nature Center](#) is a lovely place for the family and friends to visit. The coral color of desert mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), golden orange California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), blue showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*) and lavender tansy-leaved phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*) are growing throughout the garden for her to enjoy. 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*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), sticky and red monkeyflowers (*Mimulus aurantiacus* and *M. puniceus*) and Island mallow (*Lavatera assurgentiflora*). Flowering prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia littoralis*) and Mojave yucca (*Yucca schdigeri*) are particularly showy now in the desert garden section.

The Habitat Gardens at [Elizabeth Learning Center](#) continue to WOW visitors! Most of the blooms can be viewed from the sidewalk on Elizabeth Street in front of the campus. The Desert Garden overwhelms the eye with climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides* var. *hartwegii*), prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*) seed heads, wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis* var. *retrorsa*), prince's plume (*Stanleya pinnata*), beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), catsclaw (*Senegalia greggii*), desert lavender (*Condea emoryi*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), fish hook cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*), skeleton milkweed (*Asclepias subulata*), desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*), brittle bush (*Encelia farinosa*), and chuparosa (*Justicia californica*). The Vernal Pool Garden has chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), 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*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), 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.



Climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides* var. *hartwegii*). Photo by George Nanoski

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, May 25th**, and the last report of the season.

NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS

[Southern California Montane Botanic Garden](#)

The Wildlands Conservancy, Oak Glen Preserve, 39611 Oak Glen Road, Yucaipa, CA 92399. Now through May!

<https://www.facebook.com/OakGlenPreserve/>

[Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden \(rsabg.org\)](http://rsabg.org)

The California Butterfly Pavilion during garden hours. See all Events at rsabg.org.

[Los Angeles County Natural History Museum](http://www.lacnhm.org)

SATURDAY STROLLS IN THE NATURE GARDENS

Sat. April 14 (second Saturdays, Feb.-July, 2018)

9:30-11 am

The theme will be plant selection and appreciation with an emphasis on attracting garden wildlife. Free with Museum entrance. Register via 213-763-3499 Nature Gardens Director, Carol Bornstein, will lead walks with a view to plant selection and wildlife attraction.