April 9, 2021

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

COVID-19 restrictions are still appropriate in public places and different for each county, so visit websites first in planning your trip.

Prisk Native Garden in Long Beach is having an Open House this weekend, Saturday April 10 and Sunday, April 11 from 12:30 – 3:30 pm. each day. There are many lovely wildflowers to view at your own pace while strolling the pathway. Here is just some of the rainbow color palette to expect. Reds and pinks include, western red thistle (Cirsium occidentale), Island snapdragon (Gambelia speciosa), fairy duster (Calliandra eriophylla), ocotillo (Fouquieria splendens), hedgehog cactus (Echinocereus coccineus), and beavertail cactus (Opuntia basilaris), elegant clarkia (Clarkia unguiculata), birds’ eye (Gilia tricolor), varieties of coral bells (Heuchera spp.). Oranges, golds and yellows include California poppies (Eschscholzia californica), desert marigold (Baileya multiradiata), bladderpod (Peritoma arborea), fiddleneck (Amsinckia tessellata), apricot mallow (Sphaeralcia ambiguа), meadow foam (Limnanthes douglasii), tidy tips (Layia platyglossa), and some of the monkeyflower varieties (Diplacus sp. and Mimulus sp.). Green includes everything! Blues and violets include, lupines (Lupinus spp.), chia (Salvia columbariae), desert bluebells (Phacelia campanularia), baby blue-eyes (Nemophila. menziesii), penstemon (Penstemon pseudospectabilis), bee plant (Phacelia tanacetifolia), Cedros Island vervain (Verbena lilacina), Douglas Iris (Iris douglasii) blue curls (Trichostema lanatum), and sage varieties (Salvia spp.). This is a “must-see” and “must-experience” spring garden event. No admission, but donations are always accepted for this "schoolyard habitat" on the grounds of Prisk Elementary School. Small groups will be admitted over time to avoid crowding. Everyone will wear masks and follow the one-way arrows around the paths. Contact Mike at letteriello@charter.net with any questions.
It is an excellent time to visit the Sierra foothills as the earlier spring bloomers are still in good flower and the mid-season show-stoppers will peak soon. Despite the warm temperatures, the showers in late March that bypassed southern California, contributed to a good wildflower season here. Scenic drives for good wildflower viewing include Hwy 198 on the way to Sequoia Park, Dry Creek Road off Hwy 216, and Yokohl Valley Drive off Hwy 198 in the Kaweah River watershed. Of course, drive safely and pull off the road to enjoy the flowers and take photos. Along Dry Creek, foothill poppies (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*) are especially spectacular and in the Kaweah River watershed, many flowering plants can be seen along the BLM Salt Creek trails. Still in bloom, but fading in the sunniest sites, is Eastwood’s fiddleneck (*Amsinckia eastwoodiae*), while heart leaf milkweed (*Asclepias cordifolia*) is just in bud. The foothill sunburst (*Pseudobahia heermannii*), red maids (*Calandrinia menziesii*), Chinese houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), wild hyacinth (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), pretty face (*Triteleia ixioides* subsp. *scabra*), bird’s eye gilia (*Gilia tricolor*), whisker brush (*Leptosiphon ciliates*), and various lupines (*Lupinus* spp.), are just coming into bloom under pink flowering redbuds (*Cercis occidentalis*). Early blooming baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*), caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*), popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys nothofulvus*), and Padre’s shooting star (*Primula clevelandii* var. *patula*) are still very
pretty. California saxifrage (*Micranthes californica*) and common fringe pod (*Thysanocarpus curvipes*) are mostly in their fruiting stage but still very interesting.

**Foothill sunburst (Pseudobahia heermannii), bird’s eye gilia (Gilia tricolor), Chinese houses (Collinsia heterophylla), spring madia (Madia elegans) heart leaf milkweed (Asclepias cordifolia). Photos by Mike Wall**

Now, across the Valley to the west.

**Figueroa Mountain in the Los Padres National Forest** is a favorite wildflower drive in the Santa Barbara area. Figueroa Mountain road leads out of Los Olivos. As you ascend into the National Forest, cross the first cattle guard, look for popcorn flowers *Plagiobothrys* sp.), buttercups (*Ranunculus* sp.), fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia* sp.), Johnny jump-ups (*Viola pedunculata*), fiesta flowers (*Pholistoma auritum*), sky lupines (*Lupinus nanus*), and milk maids (*Cardamine californica*). Further up the road on the right, look for small patches of shooting stars (*Primula clevelandii*). As you continue to climb the mountain, stunning orange California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are blooming along the road and along the rocky hillsides. The Ceanothus (*Ceanothus crassifolius*) is also in bloom, giving the appearance of snow covering its branches. Right before you get to the rusty gate, look on the ground to the right and find some adorable cream cups (*Platyystemon californicus*). When you get to Vista Point turnout, take this opportunity to stroll around and check out

the beautiful chocolate lilies (*Fritillaria biflora*) hiding within the grass, shooting stars, and goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.). Across from Vista Point, along the road find more poppies mixed with yellow coreopsis (*Leptosyne* sp.). Continuing along the road through the Ranger Station, Davy Brown Trailhead, Ranger Peak, to Happy Canyon, you will see only spotty flower displays, mostly shooting stars and a few lupines (*Lupinus* spp.). Finally, Chicken Springs is absolutely gorgeous. It is the only place on the mountain where the poppies are really putting on a show. An underground spring allows poppies to take advantage of the extra soil moisture. Other wildflowers in bloom in this area include blue dicks, ceanothus and Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*).

At [Placerita Canyon Nature Center](#) in Newhall this week, the Ecology Trail is especially nice. There is a diversity of chapparal shrub species in bloom. Hikers should look for the blue flowering hairy ceanothus (*Ceanothus oliganthus*) and the white blooming hoary ceanothus (*Ceanothus crassifolius*), as they both will be fading soon. Check out the sprawling basket bush (*Rhus aromatica*) as well. Hiding underneath the shrubs is the California peony (*Paeonia californica*) with large burgundy flowers. On the same trail, look for the popular fan-favorite monkeyflower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*) dressed in a variety of colors—orange, yellow, or red. Purple nightshade (*Solanum parishii*), and California fuchsia (*Epilobiun canum*) are found there too. In areas where more shade and moisture are available, take in the lovely flowering ash (*Fraxinus dipetela*) and fuchsia flowering gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*). The large oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) and cottonwoods (*Populus fremontii*) are showing their tassels of flowers poised on branch tips waiting for wind to catch and carry their pollen. Back out in the open, sunnier locations, look for the fiddleneck (*Amsinckia* sp.), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) and Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*).

![Monkeyflower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*). Photo by RuthAnne Murthy](#)

There is plenty of botanizing to be done at [Tecolote Canyon](#), a coastal canyon in southwest San Diego county. The stars of the hike are the large number of wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis crassifolia*) in full bloom. You have to be there after about 2 p.m. when the flowers are fully open though. Black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*) and Mojave yucca (*Yucca schidigera*) are punctuated by a single stunning plant of fuchsia flowering gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) in bloom along the trail. Cryptantha (*Cryptantha intermedia*) was in full, bright-white-flower bloom in many places.
despite how dry this year is. Two cuties produced small mats of color in places – California popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys collinus californicus*), and small seed sand mat (*Euphorbia polycarpa*). Golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*) is beginning to bloom in spots. Blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*) are occasional in many places and rabbit tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium bioletti*) was scattered here and there. Mint-leaved vervain (*Verbena menthifolia*) is blooming with its almost-luminescent small flowers. Even the non-blooming plants were delightful. Nearly everywhere you will brush against California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), giving its lovely fragrance throughout a hike. Large stands of coastal cholla (*Cylindropuntia prolifer*) were absolutely amazing. There is also a number of San Diego barrel cactus (*Ferocactus viridescens*), a few of which were in bloom

The Habitat Gardens at [Elizabeth Learning Center](#) continue their flower show in southeast LA! Most of their blooms can be seen from the sidewalk on Elizabeth Street in front of the campus! Flowers in the Desert Habitat Garden include cream cups (*Platystemon californicus*), catsclaw (*Senegalia greggii*), desert lavender (*Condea emoryi*), Emory’s globe mallow (*Sphaeralcea emoryi var. emoryi*), creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), jojoba (*Simmondsia chinensis*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), cryptantha (*Cryptantha sp.*), brittle bush (*Encelia farinosa*), chuparosa (*Justicia californica*), blue bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), and Coulter’s lupine (*Lupinus sparsiflorus*). Their Vernal Pools Garden contains Menzies’s fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), owl’s clover (*Castilleja exserta*), blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), truncate leaf lupine (*Lupinus truncatus*), tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), wart-stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*), sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), spinescrub (*Adolphia californica*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), goldfields (*Lasthenia glabrata*), fringe-pod (*Thysanocarpus curvipes*), Del Mar manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa ssp. crassifolia*), and golden spined cereus (*Bergerocactus emoryi*). Elizabeth Learning Center is located off Elizabeth Street between Atlantic and Wilcox Avenues in Cudahy.

That’s it for this week. Look for our next report on Friday, April 16 and check back each week for the most up to date information on southland central California wildflowers.

NATIVE PLANT AND WILD FLOWER EVENTS

THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION

2021 THEODORE PAYNE ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT GARDEN TOUR: April 16-18

For details go to https://theodorepayne.org

Prisk Native Garden… School Habitat Garden Open House

Saturday April 10 and Sunday, April 11 from 12:30 – 3:30 pm. each day

No admission, but donations are always accepted for this "schoolyard habitat" on the grounds of Prisk Elementary School. Small groups will be admitted over time to avoid crowding. Everyone will wear masks and follow the one-way arrows around the paths. No Restrooms available at site. Contact Mike at letteriello@charter.net with any questions.

ENVIRONMENTAL NATURE CENTER

SELF GUIDED WILDFLOWER WALK

May 23, 2021, 12:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Join us for a Wildflower Walk! Tour the grounds in search of blooming natives. Bring a camera or your nature journal to capture their beauty, but please stay on the trail! Sign up for a window at https://encenter.org/blog/events/wildflower-walk/ Space is limited to keep everyone safe. Masks required when not physically distanced. Children 2 and under are free.

NATIVE PLANT USES WALK

May 23, 2021, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Join us for a Native Plant Uses Walk on May 23! Herbalist William Broen will discuss traditional and modern uses of plants as well as how a plant’s survival tactics affect how they are used by us, how we can tell a lot about plants through our senses, plant folklore, and other related topics. All participants will be required to wear face coverings and physically distance. Space is limited, and only those registered to attend will be admitted. The ENC is currently closed to the public except to those registered for programs. Register at

https://encenter.org/blog/events/native-plant-uses-walk-2/
