May 14, 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. This will be the last report of the season as we wrap up the end of a very dry spring.

A few weeks ago, we reported on Buck Gully Reserve in Newport Beach. Buck Gully is a “pocket” wilderness canyon with a natural perennial stream, riparian habitat, coastal sage scrub and grasslands! An update from a hiker who visited on Mother’s Day reports that it is still nice with a variety of species in bloom! Look for Parish’s purple nightshade (Solanum parishii), pretty pink hedge nettle (Stachys ajugoides), Chaparral bush mallow (Malacothamnus fasciculatus), cliff aster (Malacothrix saxatilis var. saxatilis), black sage (Salvia mellifera), and south coast morning glory (Calystegia macrosagia ssp. intermedia). Yellow and golden colors of deerweed (Acmispon glaber), gum plant (Grindelia camporum), sticky monkeyflower (Diplacus aurantiacus), golden stars (Bloomeria crocea) and bush sunflower (Encelia californica), brighten up your delightful hike of the canyon.

The western Sierra foothills is dry, but the brown hillsides still have a scattering of pink speckled clarkia (Clarkia cylindrica) and yellow bush monkey flower (Diplacus calycinus). In the upper woodland and chaparral, the hike to Marble Falls has a display of the local flora. Starting at the Potwisha Campground, the trail is cool and

shaded by interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), and California bay (*Umbellularia californica*) trees. The foothill ash (*Fraxinus dipetela*) and blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* subsp. *caerulea*) are in full bloom with creamy white flowers as well. A reminder that you are still in chaparral country are the blooming California flannel bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*) and chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*). Scrambling up and gracefully draping down the trees and shrubs, is the pipestem clematis (*Clematis lasiantha*). The winner for butterfly popularity is however, California Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon californicum*) with fritillaries, swallowtails and skippers all over their nectar rich blooms. While hardly qualifying as wildflowers, several species of ferns are prominent along the trail and worth appreciating their lacy greenery. Most common are California polypody fern (*Polypodium californicum*), lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*) and growing amongst the abundant poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), are lots of handsome coffee ferns (*Pellaea andromedifolia*). The last of the more common ferns encountered are the rock ferns (*Myriopteris intertexta*). This is a hardy sun and rock tolerant fern species found growing in marble outcrops. Along the entire trail, especially in sunny openings, wildflowers are not abundant, but of exceptional diversity. If you hike slow enough there is a lot to discover including twining brodiaea (*Dichelostemma volubile*) and common madia (*Madia elegans*) with yellow daisy-like flowers. Madia is scattered but due to the dry winter and spring they are coming to an early end of their season. Also present, but not abundant, are blue fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*), purple Ithuriel’s spear (*Triteleia laxa*), creamy yellow pretty face (*Triteleia ixioides*) and the splashy orange wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum*). Purple rock cress (*Boechera arcuata*) can be seen in places along the trail and in shady glades there are occasional good displays of the elegant woodland star (*Lithophragma affine*). Lastly, there is the cheery and showy California pink (*Silene laciniata* subsp. *california*) growing among the marble outcrops at the falls.
The scenic road that takes you up and over Figueroa Mountain in the Los Padres National Forest, starts outside the town of Los Olivos. Along the route you will find a scattering of Chinese houses (Collinsia heterophylla), and hummingbird sage (Salvia spathacea), in shady areas along with golden yarrow (Eriophyllum confertiflorum), wild onion (Allium sp.), winecup clarkia (Clarkia purpurea), caterpillar phacelia (Phacelia cicutaria) and wallflower (Erysimum capitatum). The highlight of the route is the corridor between Ranger Peak and Cachuma Saddle. It is beautiful with the perennial bush lupine (Lupinus albilfrons) in full bloom and lining the road along much of this area. Not only do their beautiful blue tones create a gorgeous sight, but the aroma they produce is simply breathtaking. Stunning bush poppies (Dendromecon rigidus), sticky monkey flowers (Diplacus aurantiacus), Mexican elderberry (Sambucus nigra subsp. caerulea), scarlet buglers (Penstemon centranthifolius), and some scattered poppies (Eschscholzia californica) are currently adorning this area as well. If you want to see these lovelies in their peak, this is the time to do so as the bush lupine are starting to seed rapidly and won’t last long. Near the end of the route through Sunset Canyon, Happy Valley and Chicken Springs look for a scattering of chia (Salvia columbariae), globe gilia, poppies, purple phacelias, golden yarrow, thistle (Cirsium occidentale), purple sage (Salvia

That’s all for this week and this season. Let’s hope for nice soaking rains this coming winter and a gorgeous wildflower display next spring. Goodbye and stay well.

NATIVE PLANT AND WILD FLOWER EVENTS

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/