March 11, 2022

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

The Theodore Payne Wild Flower Hotline offers free weekly on-line and recorded updates on the best locations for viewing spring wild flowers in Southern and Central California. All locations are on easily accessible public lands and range from urban to wild, distant to right here in L.A. We balance the spectacle of annual flower displays with perennial plants in their spring color. Please enjoy the native flora without diminishing the resource. We encourage people to treat these treasures with care and respect. Please stay on the paths, stand on bare ground, leave the flowers unharmed and take only photographs.

At Placerita Canyon Nature Center, the weather has remained cool and in addition to what we listed last week growing along trails, we can now add Wooly blue curls (Trichostema lanatum), Yerba Santa (Eriodictyon crassifolium) and blue-eyed grass (Sisyrinchium bellum). Trails include spots of red, white and blue. The scarlet fuchsia-flowering gooseberry, scarlet bugler and California peony (Paeonia californica) are flagging red blossoms. Hoary ceanothus (Ceanothus crassifolius), big berry manzanita (Arctostaphylos glauca) and climbing wild cucumber (Marah macrocarpa) are displaying tiny, white flowers. Finally, there are the blue wild hyacinth (Dipterostemon capitatus), and larkspur (Delphinium sp.). Other eye-catching specimens include golden currant (Ribes aureum) and purple nightshade (Solanum parishii). Enjoy watching the hummingbirds tussle over ownership of the gooseberries and golden currents.

California peony (Paeonia californica). Photo by RuthAnne Murthy
No one would describe the first part of the Mt. Wilson Trail in the San Gabriel Mountains as floriferous, but you can look for about 20 native plants in bloom; the caveat being that most of these are represented by only a few specimens. The wishbone bush (Mirabilis laevis var. crassifolia) spreads far along the trail. March is regularly the month for regional ceanothus bloom and ceanothus along this trail does not disappoint. Greenbark (Ceanothus spinosus), deer brush (Ceanothus integerrimus var. macrothyrs) and hairy ceanothus (Ceanothus oliganthus) are seen in every hue of blue imaginable. Additional blue color can be seen in the annuals interspersed in open spaces here and there. They include chia (Salvia columbariae), Coulter (Lupinus sparsiflorus) and stinging lupines (Lupinus hirsutissimus), Canterbury bells (Phacelia minor), blue dicks (Dipterostemon capitatus ssp. capitatus) and black sage (Salvia mellifera). There are occasional yellow color spots of California sun cups (Eulobus californicus), fiddlenecks (Amsinckia intermedia), and western wallflowers wallflower (Erysimum capitatum var. capitatum). Popcorn flowers (Cryptantha spp.) line the trail as well. The perennials, purple nightshade (Solanum xanti) and leafy buckwheat (Eriogonum fasciculatum) are showing new spring foliage and flowers. Hillside pea (Lathyrus vestitus var. vestitus), and wild cucumber (Marah macrocarpus) are climbing their way up shrubs and trees to reach the sun.

California poppies (Eschscholzia californica) are blooming at the Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve. Check out the live stream PoppyCam to see in real time the conditions of poppy blooms at the preserve. Patches of orange can be seen on the Preserve’s hillsides. If visiting the Preserve, hike to the north loop of the Antelope Trail for a good display of poppies. Lacy phacelia (Phacelia tanacetifolia) is coming in at Kitanemuk Vista Point and grapesoda lupine (Lupinus sp.) can be seen blooming on the Tehachapi Vista Trail. Fiddlenecks (Amsinckia sp.) and patches of goldfields (Lasthenia sp.) are flowering throughout the Preserve. Poppies open-up in mid-morning.

and curl up in the late afternoon/evening or if it's cold, so check the weather forecast before leaving. The weather can change quickly and it is frequently windy here in spring.

Visit [Point Mugu State Park](https://www.parks.ca.gov/default.aspx?path=pointmugustatepark) to see the annual spectacle of giant coreopsis (*Leptosyne gigantea*) in full bloom. Trails leading from PCH have the lovely the wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis*), sand verbena (*Abronia* sp.) and bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*) on display as well. Wildlife close to shore is equally noteworthy. Watch gray whales feeding off the point, along with sea lions barking and dolphins surfing.
Upper Henderson Canyon northwest of Borrego Springs in Anza Borrego Desert State Park has a dozen or so species of annuals in bloom now. Watch for the desert star (**Monoptilon bellioides**), Bigelow’s monkeyflower (**Diplacus bigelovii** var. **biglovii**), star gilia (**Gilia stellata**), desert phacelia (**Phacelia distans**) and chia (**Salvia columbariae**). Of course, most of the plants in bloom are small, with some of them hard to distinguish. But hey, they are there! No big displays, but it is hopeful to see even a few small, hardy blossoms making it in this current drought. Start your hike at Horse Camp Road.

![Desert star (**Monoptilon bellioides**) and desert phacelia (**Phacelia distans**). Photos by Tom Chester](image)

The Habitat Gardens at Elizabeth Learning Center are popping with color! Desert species include catclaw (**Senegalia greggii**), creosote bush (**Larrea tridentata**), desert lavender (**Condea emoryi**), apricot mallow (**Sphaeralcea ambigua**), bladderpod (**Peritoma arborea**), brittle bush (**Encelia farinosa**), climbing milkweed (**Funastrum cynanchoides** var. **hartwegii**), blue bells (**Phacelia campanularia**) and bird’s eye gilia (**Gilia tricolor**). The vernal pool blossoms include Menzies’ fiddleneck (**Amsinckia menziesii**), owl’s clover (**Castilleja exserta**), tidy tips (**Layia platyglossa**), deerweed (**Acmispon glaber**), wart stemmed ceanothus (**Ceanothus verrucosus**), school bells (**Dipterostemon capitatus**), California poppy (**Eschscholzia californica**), yellow-rayed goldfields (**Lasthenia glabrata**) and chia (**Salvia columbariae**). Additional species in the chaparral garden include woolly paintbrush (**Castilleja foliolosa**), Nevin’s barberry (**Berberis nevinii**), pink fairy duster (**Calliandra eriophylla**), black sage (**Salvia mellifera**), arroyo lupine (**Lupinus succulentus**), miner’s lettuce (**Claytonia perfoliata**), giant coreopsis (**Leptosyne gigantea**), sugar bush (**Rhus ovata**) and Santa Cruz Island buckwheat (**Eriogonum arborescens**). Elizabeth Learning Center is located off Elizabeth Street between Atlantic and Wilcox Avenues in Cudahy.

![Climbing milkweed (**Funastrum cynanchoides** var. **hartwegii**), deerweed (**Acmispon glaber**), Photos by George Nanoski.](image)

That’s it for this week. Look for our next report on **Friday, March 18** 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**

- **POPPY DAY SPRING PLANT SALE, April 1-2**
  
  Create an at home superbloom! TPF will have a great selection of colorful annuals and other beautiful Spring wildflowers. Sign up for a shopping time slot at: [bit.ly/PoppyDaysSpringSale2022](https://bit.ly/PoppyDaysSpringSale2022).

- **2022 THEODORE PAYNE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN TOUR**
  
  April 23-24
  
  After two years of virtual tours, we’re thrilled to announce that the 2022 Native Plant Garden Tour will be back in-person on April 23 & 24. Highlights include 10+ new gardens, a new stylized tour guide filled with vivid stories and interviews, and an after-party at L.A. State Historic Park. Visit [nativeplantgardentour.org](http://nativeplantgardentour.org) for more details.

**PLACERITA CANYON NATURE CENTER**

- **Blooms of the Season Hikes**
  
  4th Saturday of each month at 9:30, (March 26)

  Meet at the front steps of the Nature Center.

  **Open House is May 14 from 10-2**