April 1, 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.

After an absence of two years, Prisk Native Garden, at Prisk Elementary School in Long Beach, is once again throwing open the gates for public Open House events. Visit the garden on Sunday, April 3rd, and/or Sunday April 10th from 1 to 4 p.m. Prisk schoolyard habitat is recognized by many as one of the finest in Southern California. Over 26 years, the trees, shrubs and perennials have matured nicely and are particularly handsome. There is a spectacular show of annual wildflowers including scores of California poppies (Eschscholzia californica) and Arroyo lupines (Lupinus succulentus). Witness patches of both globe (Gilia capitata) and birds-eye (Gilia tricolor) gillas and cheerful, sunny yellow tidy tips (Layia platyglossa). Elegant clarkia (Clarkia unquiculata) stands tall to display their many shades of pink, mixing colorfully with the equally tall stature of golden blazing stars (Mentzelia lindleyi). In moister, sunny areas of the garden, you can view rivers of goldfields (Lasthenia californica) and yellow meadow foam (Limnanthes douglasii). Under the shade of trees, the stately blue, lavender and purple Douglas's Iris (Iris douglasiana and cultivars) is on display, as well as the fuchsia-pink blossoms of hummingbird sage (Salvia spatheacea). Walking through the desert section find the hot-pink fairy duster (Calliandra eriophylla), as well as its cousin from the south, the red Baja fairy duster (Calliandra californica). The garden is also fortunate to have desert representatives of blooming ocotillo (Fouquieria splendens), creosote bush (Larrea tridentata) and magnificent stands of apricot mallow (Sphaeralcea ambigua). Prisk Elementary School Native Garden is located at the corner of San Vicente and Los Arcos in Long Beach. Details and additional information is below under “Native Plant & Wildflower Events.”
Earlier this week, a hiker balked at the predicted 98-degree temperature at Borrego Springs in Anza Borrego Desert State Park and decided instead to check out a section of the Pacific Crest Trail at higher elevations around 4500 ft. At that elevation, it is a little early for most spring wildflowers, but some promising young plants were spotted and the hike should be good soon with many, many wildflowers. Driving along Lost Valley Road to the trailhead, there are wonderful displays of goldfields (Lasthenia gracilis) filling spaces between shrubs. After about a half mile hike from the trailhead, there is a spectacle of lavender color haze which is swaths of common phacelia (Phacelia distans) in bloom. Miner’s lettuce (Claytonia perfoliata), an early spring bloomer at lower elevations is just getting started here. The large pink bracted manzanita (Arctostaphylos pringlei ssp. drupacea) is stunningly beautiful in full bloom, with fist-sized clusters of deep pink flowers. The trailhead is near Warner Springs. Type “PCT Lost Valley” into your computer browser or seek out any Anza Borrego Park trail map (the link above) to find detailed directions.

Current bloom status reports are still flowing out of Pinnacles National Park north of King City. The highlight plant this week is the Venus thistle (*Cirsium occidentale* var. *venustum*) with red flowers easily seen from the road and probably covered with nectar feeding swallow-tail butterflies. Along open grassy slopes, yellow Johnny-jump-ups (*Viola pedunculata*) are found in large patches as part of the oak woodland landscape. Bright white blossoms of California saxifrage (*Micranthes californica*) (sax-uh-frage) and milk maids (*Cardamine californica*) grace these areas as well. Baby-blue-eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) and cheery goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*) occupy sunny plots between shrubs while single plants of Fremont’s star lily (*Toxicoscordion fremontii*) and Warriors plume (*Pedicularis densiflora*) dot the trail edges here and there.

In Claremont, visit the California Botanic Garden (formerly Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden) to see their spectacular annual flowering of the flannel bushes (*Fremontodendron* species and cultivars). California wild rose (*Rosa* species and cultivars) can be seen on the Mesa trails climbing along the fences. Scattered throughout the native habitat gardens, the elderberry trees (*Sambucus nigra*) just started blooming and are splendidly decked out in clusters of creamy-white blossoms. Sun yellow flowers of California brittlebush (*Encelia californica*) and desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*) are greeting you in large numbers near the entrance. Fragrant sages (*Salvia* spp. and cultivars) and woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) are in bloom and attracting many pollinators. Be sure to look for them on the Mesa trails. Cheerful California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) can be seen all around the garden.
At **Placerita Canyon Nature Center** in Newhall, walk any trail to enjoy the diversity of native California plants in flower or fruit. The Ecology Trail has surprises in the form of lingering spring flowering natives. The two ceanothus cousins, hairy and hoary ceanothus (*Ceanothus crassifolius* and *C. oliganthus*) are finishing their bloom and grace the trail. Flowering ash (*Fraxinus dipetela*) is splendid with creamy-white blossoms dancing in afternoon breezes. Other handsome shrubs seen along the trail include Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*), sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*) and mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides*). Sunnier places display red flowers of scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) and colorful annuals taking advantage of spring season soil moisture. Sun-cups (*Camissoniopsis intermedia*), popcorn flowers (*Plagiobothrys* sp.) and blue dicks (*Dipterospermon capitatus*) cluster at the trail edges.

![Flowering ash (Fraxinus dipetela). Photo by Michael Chatters](image)

In coastal Newport Beach, at the **Environmental Nature Center**, the moderate temperatures are favorable for spring flowering plants and the visitors observing them. Resident plants in the desert section of the nature center display sunny pastel colors like golden-flowered Indian mallow (*Abutilon palmeri*), sunny yellow desert encelia (*Encelia farinosa*) and pink fairy duster (*Calliandra eriophylla*). Visitors can also see flowering natives that reside in natural habitats along the coast. Colors represented in these species include blues of ceanothus (*Ceanothus* spp.) blossoms, yellow bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), red monkeyflower (*Diplacus purpureus*), fuchsia-pink hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*), lavender tansy-leaf phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*), and sapphire blue Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*). Orange poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are found everywhere in the garden.

The live stream **PoppyCam** at the **Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve**, is showing fewer orange patches of California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*). The “big bloom” has peaked, but there is still a diversity of wildflowers popping up and will display for a few more weeks. If visiting, check the weather forecast before leaving. The weather can change suddenly, and it is frequently windy there during the spring.

The Habitat Gardens at Elizabeth Learning Center are still wowing with a kaleidoscope of colors! Desert species include thistle sage (*Salvia carduacea*), catclaw (*Senegalia greggii*), jojoba (*Simmondsia chinensis*), sweet bush (*Bebbia juncea*), creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), desert lavender (*Condea emoryi*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), cryptantha (*Cryptantha sp.*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), brittle bush (*Encelia farinosa*), fiveneedle pricklyleaf (*Thymophylla pentachaeta*), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis var. villosa*), climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides var. hartwegii*), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), blue bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), bird’s eye gilia (*Gilia tricolor*) and coulter’s lupine (*Lupinus sparsiflorus*). The vernal pool area contains Menzies’ fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), California sage (*Salvia californica*), owl’s clover (*Castilleja exserta*), tidy tips (*Layia platyglossa*), fringe-pod (*Thysanocarpus curvipes*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), wart stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*), school bells, a.k.a. blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), golden spine embedded cactus (*Bergerocactus emoryi*), sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), yellow-rayed goldfields (*Lasthenia glabrata*), cliff spurge (*Euphorbia misera*), spinescrub (*Adolphia californica*), school bells, a.k.a. blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), golden spine embedded cactus (*Bergerocactus emoryi*), sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*), vernal popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys undulatus*) and Orcutt’s quillwort (*Isoetes orcuttii*). Some additional species in the chaparral garden include woolly paintbrush (*Castilleja foliolosa*), splendid mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*), southern mountain misery (*Chamaebatia australis*), purple nightshade (*Solanum xanti*), 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*), Santa Cruz Island buckwheat (*Eriogonum arborescens*) and Orcutt’s hazardia (*Hazardia Orcuttii*). Elizabeth Learning Center is located off Elizabeth Street between Atlantic and Wilcox Avenues in Cudahy. Most gardens can be seen from the sidewalk in front of the school without having to check in at the Main Office.

That’s it for this week. Look for our next report on Friday, April 8th 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.

- **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 for more details.

Prisk Native Garden’s Open House

**Sunday, April 3, 1-4 pm; Sunday, April 10, 1-4 pm.**

*At Prisk Elementary School, San Vicente & Los Arcos, Long Beach.*

Admission is free. Donations are accepted for our schoolyard habitat. Parking on street outside of Garden, which is near the intersection of San Vicente Street and Los Arcos Street, in Long Beach, 90815. (The School’s office is around the corner on Fanwood; (Garden is NOT there!). Not wheelchair accessible; No restrooms. Overflow crowds may have to sometimes wait briefly in our adjacent Learning Arbor.

We have free books and some free plant material, as well as some free lupine seeds. Children need to be monitored by their adult companions.

For more info: letteriello@charter.net

**PLACERITA CANYON NATURE CENTER**

**Blooms of the Season Hikes**

4th Saturday of each month at 9:30, (April 24)

Meet at the front steps of the Nature Center.

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