May 27, 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.

This is the last wild flower report of the 2022 season. If you decided to stay local over the holiday weekend, here are some regional trails you might explore.

In the San Jacinto Mountains near Mountain Center, trek along the Cedar Spring and parts of the Pacific Crest Trails for a floral treasure hunt. The quarry is a sweet little plant that has an unattractive name—the shaggy haired alumroot (Heuchera hirsutissima). Dozens of stalks of tiny pink, bell shaped flowers arise from clusters of rounded leaves hugging the ground. Bunches of these diminutive plants spread over large areas for a stunning display. Southern mountain phlox (Phlox austromontana) and giant four o’clock (Mirabilis multiflora var. pubescens) are in bloom here as well. The attractive mazanitas (Arctostaphylos spp.) growing in this mountain range are beginning to display fruit after their spectacular bloom in the spring.

Shaggy haired alumroot (Heuchera hirsutissima). Photos by Don Rideout

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The **Mt. Wilson Trail** above Sierra Madre has many wildflowers blooming now. Look for red gland euporbia (**Euphorbia melanadenia**), cliff asters (**Malacothrix saxatilis** var. **tenuifolia**), cryptantha (**Cryptantha intermedia**), pincushion flowers (**Chaenactis artemisiifolia**), and California chicory (**Rafinesquia californica**). There are still a few Coulter’s lupine (**Lupinus sparsiflorus**), chia (**Salvia columbariae**) and canterbury bells (**Phacelia minor**) as well. Punch-bowl clarkia (**Clarkia bottae**), giant flowered phacelia (**Phacelia grandiflora**), whispering bells (**Emmenanthe penduliflora** var. **penduliflora**), California primrose (**Eulobus californicus**), and golden yarrow (**Eriophyllum confertiflorum** var. **confertiflorum**) are hanging out with scarlet larkspur (**Delphinium cardinale**), cardinal catchfly (**Silene laciniata** ssp. **laciniata**) and cobweb thistle (**Cirsium occidentale** var. **occidentale**) in this landscape too. The normally understated California chaparral shrubs are now blooming for a short while. Look for lovely native butterflies and other pollinators visiting deerweed (**Acmispon glaber** var. **brevialatus**), chamise (**Adenostoma fasciculatum** var. **fasciculatum**), Johnston’s honeysuckle (**Lonicera subspicata** var. **denudata**), California buckwheat (**Eriogonum fasciculatum** var. **polifolium**), southern bush monkeyflower (**Diplacus longiflorus**), white sage (**Salvia apiana**), and elderberry (**Sambucus nigra** ssp. **caerulea**). Tucked around rocks and boulders, search for canyon dudleya (**Dudleya cymosa** ssp. **pumila**), with yellow flowers bursting from red stems from the center of this little succulent. Plummer’s mariposa lily (**Calochortus plummerae**) is gorgeous dressed in lavender flowers stitched with golden hairs. The most attractive plant you will encounter along the trail is one of our California icons—the holly-leaved Toyon (**Heteromeles arbutifolia**). Its attractive forest green foliage is heavy with sprays of small white flowers. These will turn to bright red- orange at the end of the year.

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Over in the coastal Santa Monica Mountains, many of the rare Humboldt lily (*Lilium humboldtii*) are blooming, mostly on the trail to Trippet Ranch. Over the next several weeks there should be quite a show put on by these lilies. You cannot miss them.

At **Placerita Canyon Nature Center** in Newhall, the Canyon an Ecology trails are suggested pathways for seeing a variety of native plants. Chaparral flowering shrubs include elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*), Southern honeysuckle (*Lonicera subspicata*), and chamise (*Adenostema fasciculatum*). California wild rose (*Rosa californica*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*), and slender stem sunflower (*Helianthus gracilentus*), are decorated with a variety of colorful butterflies. Heart-leaf bush penstemon (*Keckiella cordifolia*) stands out from the others with red flowers frequented by hummingbirds. Blooming perennials that display a riot of colors include sticky monkeyflower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*), deerweed (*Acmispon glabrata*), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), and cobweb thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*). Showy annuals that linger along the trails are yellow pincushion, (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*), popcorn flowers (*Plagiobothrys* sp.), wild licorice (*Glycyrrhiza lepidota*) and cliff asters (*Malacothrix saxitalis*). Purple nightshade (*Solomonum* sp.) and vervain (*Verbena* sp.) still add amazing purple color to the trails and hiding under shrubs and perennials is a lovely succulent—southern California dudleya (*Dudleya lanceolata*). The lovely butterfly mariposa lily (*Calochortus venustus*) surprises you at every glance because the color is so variable, but all color forms are decorated with a maroon spot displayed on each petal. Finally, the farewell-to-spring or punchbowl clarkia (*Clarkia bottae*) reminds us of the promise of the 2023 spring to come.

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If you just want a leisurely stroll surrounded by a multihued California plant palette, the Environmental Nature Center in Newport Beach is your destination. The Nature Center is transitioning to late spring colors, and annuals are giving way to intriguing perennials. Perfumed flowers of California buckwheat (Eriogonum fasciculatum), Yerba Santa (Eriodictyon crassifolium), California wild rose (Rosa californica), lemonade-berry (Rhus integrifolia), California buckeye (Aesculus californica), Cleveland sage (Salvia clevelandii), white sage (Salvia apiana) and mock orange (Philadelphus lewisi), mixed with the scent of the salty Pacific Ocean air, transports you to a familiar paradise every Californian recognizes.

Throughout the California Botanic Garden in Claremont, the St. Catherine’s lace (Eriogonum giganteaum) is in full bloom and looking particularly handsome all over the garden. The narrowleaf milkweed (Asclepias fascicularis) is now in bloom and attracting monarchs! Toyon (Heteromeles arbutifolia) just started showing clusters of tiny white flowers. The beautiful fern-leaf ironwood (Lyonothamnus floribundus) is displaying clusters of white flowers that contrast nicely with the deep green foliage. More colorful entries this week include the scarlet monkeyflower (Erythranthe cardinalis) and coyote mint (Monardella villosa). Hooker’s evening primrose (Oenothera elata) is standing tall and greeting you with lovely yellow blossoms. Other notable blooms to seek out include cobweb thistle (Cirsium occidentale), giant four o’clock (Mirabilis multiflora), Apache plume (Fallugia paradoxa), hedgehog cactus (Echinocereus engelmannii), and several prickly pears (Opuntia sp.) are blooming in the desert garden. The large, colorful clusters of flowers on the desert willows (Chilopsis linearis) and some of the bold Matilija poppy (Romneya coulteri) can also be found scattered in the desert garden.
Late Spring wildflowers still dazzle at the E.L.C. Habitat Gardens! Species in the desert garden include thistle sage (Salvia carduacea), desert senna (Senna armata), Coves’ cassia (Senna covesii), catclaw (Senegalia greggii), jojoba (Simmondsia chinensis), sweet bush (Bebbia junccea), 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 clustered tarweed (Deinandra fasciculata), California sage (Salvia californica), chaparral prickly pear (Opuntia oricola), coastal cholla (Cylindropuntia prolifera), tidy tips (Layia platyglossa), deerweed (Acmispon glaber), school bells, a.k.a. blue dicks (Dipterostemon capitatus), golden spined cereus (Bergerocactus emoryi), San Diego ceanothus (Ceanothus cyaneus), sawtooth goldenbush (Hazardia squarrosa), California poppy (Eschscholzia californica), chia (Salvia columbariae), and Otay mesa mint (Pogogyne nudiuscula). Some additional species in the chaparral garden include scarlet larkspur (Delphinium cardinalis), Matilija poppy (Romneya coulteri), blue paloverde (Parkinsonia florida), woolly paintbrush (Castilleja foliolaris), calico monkeyflower (Diplacus p pictus), fairy lantern (Calochortus albus), splendid mariposa lily (Calochortus splendens), Apache plume (Fallugia paradoxa), southern mountain misery (Chamaebatia australis), chaparral nightshade (Solanum xanti), pink fairy duster (Calliandra eriophylla), black sage (Salvia mellifera), giant coreopsis (Leptosyne gigantea), California rose (Rosa californica), sugar bush (Rhus ovata), Santa Cruz Island buckwheat (Eriogonum arborescens) and Orcutt’s hazardia (Hazaria 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. Until next year!

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California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*). Photo by George Nanoski

That’s all for this season. We will be back in March 2023. Until then, stay safe and dream of super blooms for 2023.

**NATIVE PLANT AND WILD FLOWER EVENTS**

**THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION**

- Many education classes on gardening with natives are being offered at the Theodore Payne Foundation this month. Find more information and registration details at [theodorepayne.org](http://theodorepayne.org)