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.

APRIL 28, 2023

ENJOY RESPONSIBLY

While super blooms are a beautiful and awe-inspiring natural phenomenon, they are also delicate and are easily damaged by human activity, so it is important to enjoy them responsibly and minimize the impact on fragile ecosystems. Please...

- Stay on designated trails
- Share the trails; be respectful of others
- Visit on weekdays and/or off-peak hours, if possible
- Do not collect or trample wildflowers
- Remember your experience(s) through photos

Short heat waves are alternating with short cooling periods is developing into a late spring weather pattern. Wildflowers at lower elevations are losing their bloom, so you should get out to see them in the next week or so.

GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY

There's still time to appreciate the wildflowers at of Carrizo Plain National Monument, but go now! The north areas of the Monument, along 7-mile road are flush with hillside daisies (Monolopia lanceolata), and on the alkali flats, you'll see vibrant stands of Valley larkspur (Delphinium recurvatum), growing amidst dense carpets of goldfields (Lasthenia gracilis) and owl's clover (Castilleja exserta). On Soda Lake Road, south of the lake, thistle sage (Salvia carduacea), is in full bloom, alongside desert dandelion (Malacothrix coulteri), yellow pincushion (Chaenactis glabriuscula) and locoweed (Astragalus oxyphysus). If you have a high clearance, 4WD drive vehicle, the ridge areas on both the Temblor and Caliente ranges are wonderfully rich and floriferous now. Look for hillsides of desert candles (Caulanthus inflatus), San Joaquin mentzelia (Mentzelia pectinata), phacelias (Phacelia spp.), gillas (Gilia spp), onions (Allium spp.), and much more. You might even spot stinkbells (Fritillaria agrestis), growing along the Caliente ridge.
SOUTHERN SIERRA FOOTHILLS

The hills aside Hwy 198 and Lake Kaweah are awash with the early bloom of bright yellow elegant madia (*Madia elegans*) with blue islands of silver leaf lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*) and fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*) floating in the yellow sea. You must actually stop (safely!) and get out of the car to detect the pink tomatc clover (*Trifolium willdenovii*), pale yellow mountain pretty face (*Triteleia ixioides*), thin-lobed owl’s clover (*Castilleja lineariloba*) and caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*).

Continue to the Three Rivers and Salt Creek area to take some awesome hikes to view a variety of lovely flowers. Check out the Wild Flower Hotline reports of the past few weeks to see what is continuing to flower in that region.
SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

In the Santa Monica Mountains, the Mishe Mokwa Trail near Circle X Ranch, and the Backbone Trail from the Mishe Mokwa parking lot are worth a day of exploration. On the Backbone trail down to a marshy area is a large group of red skinned onions (*Allium haematochiton*), blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*) and seep monkeyflowers (*Erythranthe guttata*). Along these trails, also encounter succulent lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*), Pacific pea (*Lathyrus vestitus*), Catalina mariposa lily (*Calochortus catalinae*), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*), wide throated yellow monkey flower (*Diplacus brevipes*), tomcat clover (*Trifolium willdenovii*), Kellogg’s snapdragon (*Antirrhinum kelloggii*), stinging lupine (*Lupinus hirsutissimus*), white star lilies (*Toxicoscordion fremontii*), Danny’s skullcap (*Scutellaria tuberosa*) and globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*).
ANTELOPE VALLEY

The reviews are mixed regarding the quality of the poppy bloom at the Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve. Nonetheless, warm weather has encouraged poppies at to open turning the landscape bright orange. Visit the reserve and choose to walk any of the eight miles of trails to see poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), lupines (*Lupinus* spp.), goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.), fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia* sp.), coreopsis (*Leptosyne* sp.) and more. The poppies have managed to escape the Preserve quite well and populated many wildflower fields outside the park and throughout Antelope Valley. While visiting the area, we also suggest you visit Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland State Park, located seven miles west of the Poppy Reserve. Here you will see a native Joshua Tree—Juniper Woodland, one of the few remaining of this habitat which once spread across the Antelope Valley. There is another great wildflower display near Elizabeth Lake to view poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), hillside daisy (*Monolopia lanceolata*), goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.), sky lupine (*Lupinus nanus*) and phacelia (*Phacelia* sp.). Portal Ridge Wildlife Preserve in the Antelope Valley, 20 miles west of Lancaster has hillsides covered in Bigelow’s coreopsis (*Leptosyne bigelovii*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*) and poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*). Look for large patches of Coulter’s jewel flower (*Caulanthus coulteri*) and some Davy’s gilia (*Gilia latiflora* ssp. *davyi*).
Hillside covered in Bigelow’s coreopsis (Leptosyne bigelovii), Davy’s gilia (Gilia latiflora ssp. davyi), Coulter’s jewel flower (Caulanthus coulteri), California poppies (Eschscholzia californica). Photos by Joseph Brooks.

SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS

The main trail at Placerita Canyon Nature Center is still closed due to running water in the creek! The Ecology Trail however has a wonderful variety right now and it is a joy to explore. The oaks (Quercus agrifolia, Q. berberidifolia) and Fremont cottonwood (Populus fremontii) are showing their flowery catkins and flowering ash (Fraxinus dipetala) is displaying masses of buttery blossoms. Elderberry (Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea) is in bloom along with hairy ceanothus (Ceanothus oliganthus). Sugar bush (Rhus ovata), black sage (Salvia mellifera), basket bush (Rhus aromatica) and Yerba Santa (Eriodictyon crassifolium) are in flower. Annual wildflowers can be found in open sunny places along trails and growing in patches between shrubs. They include Fremont white star lily (Toxicoscordion fremontii), sun cups (Camissoniopsis intermedia), popcorn flowers (Plagiobothrys sp.), whispering bells (Emmenanthe penduliflora) spotted eucrypta (Eucrypta chrysanthemifolia), silver puffs (Uropappus lindleyi), common phacelia (Phacelia distans) and chaparral gilia (Gilia angelensis). Pacific pea (Lathyrus vestitus) is twining over just about any plant to reach sunlight. Cobweb thistle (Cirsium occidentale), scarlet bugler (Penstemon centranthifolius) and purple nightshade (Solanum sp.) are a handsome trio along the trail and this week are accompanied by spiny lupine (Lupinus hirsutissimus), yellow pincushion (Chaenactis glabriuscula) and goldfields (Lasthenia sp.).

Fremont white star lily (Toxicoscordion fremontii). Photo by RuthAnne Murthy
LOW DESERT — SAN DIEGO COUNTY

In Anza Borrego Desert State Park, the Wilson Trail and in drainages north and south of the trail the bloom is getting on very well. This area is at the western boundary of the park, east of Ranchita and south and above Culp Valley, at elevations of 4000 to 4300 feet. The Borrego Valley floor and its washes are withering but exploring the higher elevations within the Park is quite satisfying. The flowering is occurring mostly on the south-facing slopes of pinyon woodlands near the Wilson Peak ridgeline. Full bloom now seems very hard to believe, since not that long ago, there was snow there! But the plants sense that heat is coming, so they need to bloom now before they run out of moisture. Another surprising thing is that the annuals are mostly small. Despite all the rain this area has received, the very unusual cold winter kept the plants from growing large. Most of them make up for their tiny stature by being very abundant, and hence still produce nice carpets of color. Pretty bajada lupine (Lupinus concinnus), goldfields (Lasthenia gracilis) and hairy lotus (Acmispon strigosus) are in bloom everywhere forming carpets along the Wilson Trail. The sweet little belly flower, Wallace’s woolly sunflower (Eriophyllum wallacei), is

California buckeyes (Aesculus californica), many-flowered Linanthus (Leptosiphon floribundus), fairy-duster (Calliandra eriophylla). Photos courtesy of CalBG.
producing beautiful displays in nearly all the drainages. Common phacelia (Phacelia distans) is producing large patches of color at the base of many shrubs all along the route, as it typically does in good years. There are large numbers of white tidy tips (Layia glandulosa), in full bloom in many places. Some areas also have abundant California coreopsis (Leptosyne californica) and yellow pincushion (Chaenactis glabriuscula) displays in washes and quilting hillsides. There is one stunning hillside north of the Wilson Trail that was covered by chia (Salvia columbariae) in full bloom, producing a purple haze from a distance. Some shrubs are in the blooming game, too. Cupped leaf ceanothus (Ceanothus perplexans) are stunning clouds of white scattered about. Interior goldenbush (Ericameria linearifolia) is just beginning to be showy here. They have their first flowers, and many more are budded up with flowers soon to come. Although Parry’s jujube (Ziziphus parryi) produces no blooms to write home about, a single shrub has a very strong, lovely fragrance that can be detected from 100 feet or so away. They will produce much olfactory pleasure along your hike. It is considered a highlight to find some plants of cushion cryptantha (Greeneocharis circumscissa) along this trail as well. Getting to the Wilson Trailhead requires 2.4 miles of driving on a dirt road south of S22. The last mile of the dirt road is very rutted in areas, requiring careful driving. Although 2 wd cars with decent clearance can easily negotiate this road, there are spots where timid drivers will not want to risk falling into a rut. Some people may therefore wish to just drive the 1.4 miles of the Jasper Trail Road from S22 to the junction with the Old Culp Road, and park there and walk the remaining mile to the Wilson Trail.

If you are driving east from I-15, along SR76 from Fallbrook to Lake Henshaw in the Palomar Mtn area, a blue ceanothus is now in full bloom, with a number of plants along the road, and hillsides on the north-facing slopes across the San Luis Rey canyon.

This species is also in full bloom along the drive from S22 from the junction with S2 to Ranchita. The hillsides south of S22 were dappled with white in the vicinity of the PCT. It is always surprising to see how many Ceanothus bushes there are in this area that otherwise looks like it is solid chamise and oaks. There are tons of stinging lupine in bloom all along the road. The beautiful San Diego pea is producing patches of reddish color in a handful of areas and the first elderberries are in bloom in the Pala area of SR76. Goldfields (Lasthenia sp.) continue to be in full bloom in the Lake Henshaw area.
White tidy tips (*Layia glandulosa*), California coreopsis (*Leptosyne californica*), cupped leaf ceanothus (*Ceanothus perplexans*). Chia (*Salvia columbariae*) in full bloom, producing a purple haze from a distance. A tiny trio of cushion cryptantha (*Greeneocharis circumscissa*), Wallace's woolly sunflower (*Eriophyllum wallacei*), bajada lupine (*Lupinus concinnus*).

Critters: Ornate Checkered Beetle (*Trichodes ornatus*), Blainville's Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*). All photos by Jim Roberts and Tom Chester.
The **Arroyo Seco Woodland and Wildlife Park** in South Pasadena (South Pasadena Nature Park), for short, is a four-acre habitat park along the Arroyo Seco flood control channel. Vegetation includes mature trees: coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*), southern California black walnuts (*Juglans californica*), and western sycamores (*Platanus racemosa*). There are also blue elderberries (*Sambucus mexicana*), toyons (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), golden currants (*Ribes aureum* var. *gracillimum*) and other coastal sage scrub shrubs. Right now, showy penstemons (*Penstemon spectabilis*), scarlet buglers (*Penstemon centranthifolius*), poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), wild cucumbers (*Marah macrocarpa*), black sages (*Salvia mellifera*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*), and Nevin’s barberries (*Berberis nevinii*) can be found blooming in the park. In addition, a chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*) believed to have been planted in December 2014 is in full bloom. It is located next to the owl box in the center of the park. Also, of special interest are the penstemons that resulted from hybridization of scarlet buglers (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) and showy penstemons (*Penstemon spectabilis*). A new Demonstration Garden with low-volume irrigation was installed this past winter. It is located on the eastern side of the park adjacent to the golf course driving range and next to the bicycle/pedestrian path. The Park, open every day, has been maintained since 2006 by Friends of South Pasadena Nature Park volunteers. Our next volunteer day will be held on May 20, 9 am – noon. More information can be found at [www.WeedingWildSuburbia.com/nature-park](http://www.WeedingWildSuburbia.com/nature-park)
Elizabeth Learning Center has all the flowers in southeast L.A.! Their Desert Habitat Garden WOWS with desert lily (Hesperocallis undulata), desert paintbrush (Castilleja chromosa), owl's clover (Castilleja exserta), silver puffs (Uropappus lindleyi), miniature lupine (Lupinus bicolor), chia (Salvia columbariae), wishbone bush (Mirabilis laevis var. villosa), creosote bush (Larrea tridentata), desert lavender (Condea emoryi), apricot mallow (Sphaeralcea ambigua), Emory’s globe mallow (Sphaeralcea emoryi), bladderpod (Peritoma arborea), brittle bush (Encelia farinosa), fiveneedle pricklyleaf (Thymophylla pentachaeta), climbing milkweed (Funastrum cynanchoides var. hartwegii), jojoba (Simmondsia chinensis), blue bells (Phacelia campanularia), bird’s eye gilia (Gilia tricolor) and Coulter’s lupine (Lupinus sparsiflorus). The Vernal Pools Habitat Garden contains golden-spined cereus (Bergerocactus emoryi), Nuttall’s snapdragon (Antirrhinum sp.), truncate-leaf lupine (Lupinus truncatus), Menzies’ fiddleneck (Amsinckia menziesii), owl’s clover (Castilleja exserta), Otay mountain lotus (Hosackia crassifolia var. otayensis), tidy tips (Layia platyglossa), fringe-pod (Thysanocarpus curvipes), Arroyo lupine (Lupinus succulentus), coastal cholla (Cylindropuntia prolifera), deerweed (Acmispon glaber), school bells (Dipterostemon capitatus), sawtooth goldenbush (Hazardia squarrosa), California poppy (Eschscholzia californica), yellow-rayed goldfields (Lasthenia glabrata), and cliff spurge (Euphorbia misera). Additional species in the Chaparral Habitat Garden include fairy lantern (Calochortus albus), splendid mariposa lily (Calochortus splendens), island barberry (Berberis pinnata ssp. insularis), Southern mountain misery (Chamaebatia australis), Southern California black walnut (Juglans californica), Matilija poppy (Romneya coulteri), prickly poppy (Argemone munita), scarlet larkspur (Delphinium cardinale), stinging lupine (Lupinus hirsutissimus), woolly paintbrush (Castilleja foliolosa), Nevin’s barberry (Berberis nevinii), pink fairy duster (Calliandra eriophylla), black sage (Salvia mellifera), miner’s lettuce (Claytonia perfoliata), Santa Rosa Island sage (Salvia brandegeei), red-skinned onion (Allium haematochiton), sugar bush (Rhus ovata), Santa Cruz Island buckwheat (Eriogonum arborescens), and blue-eyed grass (Sisyrinchium bellum).

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. For a more immersive visit Tuesday - Friday, contact George Nanoski, the Habitat Gardens coordinator via email: gtn5586@lausd.net. His conference period is 10:30am - 12:20pm. or a visit can be arranged after 3:30 when school is out.

That’s it for this week. Look for our next report on Friday, May 5 and check back each week for the most up to date information on southern California wildflower regions to visit.
LEMON LILY FESTIVAL | JUNE 24

Something to look forward to in June! The Idyllwild Lemon Lily Festival highlights the rarity of one of the city’s most precious native flowers. Spend the day celebrating this beautiful yellow flower that only grows above 4,000 feet.