

# WILD FLOWER HOTLINE

MARCH – MAY 2023

Celebrating  
**40**  
Years



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.

## MAY 19, 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

Only three more weeks left of wildflower reports for 2023. It's time for our native Chaparral communities along trails at mid and upper elevations to start exhibiting their annual splendor.

## CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST RANGES

North Wilderness Trail in [Pinnacles National Park](#), look for the Coast Range triplet lily (*Triteleia lugens*). It is endemic to California and is a bulb plant that prefers forest and chaparral habitats. The flowers have six yellow rounded petals each with a dark center vein. Another beautiful bulb that has popped up along the same trail is the crinkled onion (*Allium crispum*). The crinkled onion is distinguished from other onion species in the park by its inner flower petals which are wavy (crinkled!) on the margins. The butterfly Mariposa lily (*Calochortus venustus*), like many Mariposa lilies, can be variable in color but all are extremely attractive! Most in the park are white with maroon-colored centers, brushed with maroon spots on the petals and 6 golden stamens. The lilies can be found along the Condor Gulch Trail. Two late spring clarkia species can be found in open areas and woodlands in the park. The elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*) is dressed in shades of pink, lavender, maroon, red, and white. It has distinct spreading "clawed" petals. Chaparral clarkia (*Clarkia affinis*) sports pink petals that have small red spots that vary from flower to flower. Scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) has tubular red flowers and is predominantly pollinated by hummingbirds, but it also attracts bees and butterflies. It has attractive waxy stems

and leaves and can be found growing in dry open and disturbed areas. Woolly pod milkweed (*Asclepias eriocarpa*) is also found in dry open areas. The foliage is felty green gray. The flowers are white or bluish pink and grow in large clusters. This species, like other milkweeds, is an important food plant for the monarch butterfly caterpillar. Two typical “fire followers” can be seen blooming now. One is the annual wind poppy (*Papaver heterophyllum*). Look for it in open grassy areas. It is in the poppy family and has bright orange petals and a several maroon stamens. This plant’s seeds require fire to germinate, and its flowers are self-pollinating. Woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) is a perennial that grows in woodlands and chaparral habitat and is considered a “fire follower” as well. Blue curls often begin growth soon after a fire. The flowers grow in clusters along the stem and the entire plant is fragrant like many species in the mint family. The Venus thistle (*Cirsium occidentale* var. *venustum*) can grow up to 6 feet tall and have several bright red flower heads. The red blooms are a food source for hummingbirds and swallowtail butterflies. You can’t miss it! Venus thistle can be found throughout the park.



Above: Woolly pod milkweed (*Asclepias eriocarpa*), chaparral clarkia (*Clarkia affinis*), wind poppy (*Papaver heterophyllum*). Below: Butterfly Mariposa lily (*Calochortus venustus*), Venus thistle (*Cirsium occidentale* var. *venustum*), crinkled onion (*Allium crispum*). Photos by Andrew Harmon except for *A. crispum* which is by William Dornbach.

## THE VALLEY

---

Visit the [Tujunga Wash/Oro Vista Park](#) area and explore the 1.5-mile loop trail near Sunland, California. Generally considered an easy route, this trail is great for displays of yellow pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*), chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), Coulter’s snapdragon (*Antirrhinum coulteri*) and thistleleaf Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*) plus smaller numbers of about 50 other Coastal Sage Scrub and Chaparral plant species. Look for the endemic

Davidson's bush mallow (*Malacothamnus davidsonii*) too. to Figueroa Mt. Road is passable all the way through to Sunset Valley.



Oro Vista Trail scene. Photo by Michael Charters.

The gardens surrounding the [Theodore Payne Foundation](#) have lots of the late spring perennials blooming now. The cadre of sage (*Salvia* spp.) and penstemon (*Penstemon* spp.) species and varieties are riotous in color and form from groundcover to spreading shrubs. They flaunt every imaginable shade of blue and pink. The matilija poppies (*Romneya coulteri*) have their own swagger, standing tall with large “sunny-side-up” crepe white flowers with bright yellow centers! A variety of intriguing annuals and orange California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are still going strong as well. After admiring the lively landscape and wishing these handsome plants were in your own garden, visit the TPF Sales Nursery and make those wishes a reality!



Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*). Photo by Genevieve Arnold.

## SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS

---

A visit to [Placerita Canyon Nature Center](#) to hike chaparral trails is a treat for your senses this time of year. After a stroll or hike, have a picnic under the cool shaded oak groves surrounding the Nature Center. Several trails extend out from the Nature Center and vary in length. The main trail is closed because of running water in the creek, but all other trails welcome visitors. A popular route is the hike from Heritage Trail to Hillside Trail. There is a wonderful variety annuals and perennials. It is a joy to walk the trail. Common to see on any visit and any trail, but always beautiful are Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon*

*crassifolium*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) and purple nightshade (*Solanum xanti*). Yellow pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*) is flowering in huge numbers accompanied by other yellow-gold hues of flowering goldfields (*Lasthenia* sp.), Southern sun cups (*Camissoniopsis* sp.), sticky monkey flowers (*Diplacus longiflorus*) and golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*). White popcorn flowers (*Plagiobothrys* sp.), elegant clarkias (*Clarkia unguiculata*) and silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*) remain visitors' favorites. The perennials scattered about include scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), holly leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*) and lance-leaf dudleya (*Dudleya lanceolata*). There are still many flowers on Ecology Trail including massive numbers of yellow pincushion flowers. Visit that trail too if you have time.



Flowers of lance-leaf dudleya (*Dudleya lanceolata*), elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*). Photos by RuthAnne Murthy.

The [Mt. Wilson trail](#) above Sierra Madre is awash in flowers right now. Mt. Wilson Trail is 7.5 miles from the bottom to the top at Mt. Wilson with a 4500' elevation differential that displays a tremendous diversity of plants. Most people hike as far as First Water and turn around, but there are those that enjoy hiking to the top and back. Depending how far up one treks, a hiker will be rewarded by seeing some of Southern California's most iconic trees. These include big cone Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga macrocarpa*), incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), three species of oaks (*Quercus* spp.), big leaf maple (*Acer macrophylla*), walnut (*Juglans californica*), bay (*Umbellularia californica*) and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*). Shrubs and woody perennials encountered along the way are sticky monkeyflower (*Diplacus longiflorus*), rock goldenbush (*Ericameria cuneata* var. *cuneata*), coffeeberry (*Frangula californica* ssp. *californica*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), holly leaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia* ssp. *ilicifolia*), and heartleaf penstemon (*Keckiella cordifolia*). These beauties are frolicking with attractive bright pink prickly phlox (*Linanthus californicus*), southern honeysuckle (*Lonicera subspicata* var. *denudata*), laural sumac (*Malosma laurina*), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*), Grinnell's (*Penstemon grinnellii* var. *grinnellii*) and showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), black (*Salvia mellifera*), white (*Salvia apiana*) and Cleveland sages (*Salvia clevelandii*), buckwheats (*Eriogonum* spp.) and nightshades (*Solanum* spp.). Stop to admire the California false indigo bush (*Amorpha californica* var. *californica*). It is the host plant for the Pacific Dogface butterfly, California's state butterfly. Other colorful characters you'll notice include yarrows (*Achillea* spp.), pincushions (*Chaenactis* spp.), fairy lanterns (*Calochortus*

*albus*), a variety of mariposa lilies (*Calochortus* spp.), sun cups (*Camissoniopsis confusa*), clarkias (*Clarkia* spp.), Martin's paint brush (*Castilleja applegatei* ssp. *martini*), and both scarlet (*Delphinium cardinale*) and spreading (*Delphinium patens* ssp. *hepaticoides*) larkspurs. It is customary to witness the seasonal flowering of canyon dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *pumila*), whispering bells (*Emmenanthe penduliflora* var. *penduliflora*), everlasting (*Pseudognaphalium californicum*), many phacelia species (*Phacelia* spp.), twining snapdragon (*Antirrhinum kelloggii*), splendid gilia (*Gilia splendens*) and chaparral gilia (*Gilia angelensis*) and three species of poppies (*Eschscholzia* spp.) including small flowered meconella (*Meconella denticulate*)— a white poppy. Always be on the lookout for poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*) and poodle-dog bush (*Eriodictyon parryi*). Both are skin irritants but are usually found off trail. (Note: Trail will be closed May 27 for the annual trail race).



Small flowered meconella (*Meconella denticulate*), false indigo (*Amorpha californica* var. *californica*), big cone Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga macrocarpa*). Photos by Michael Charters.

With summer coming around, the [California Botanic Garden](#) is full of color! The annual blooming of California buckeyes (*Aesculus californica*) continues. You can't miss the prolific spikes of fragrant blush pink flowers. Up on the Mesa, look for wild hyacinth (*Dipterostemon multiflorum*), then make your way to the reflecting pond to see the lovely stream orchids (*Epipactis gigantea*). Along the path to the pond look for the Coast Range triplet lily (*Triteleia lugens*) that has also sprung up. Its golden flowers compete with the stream orchid for your attention. You don't have to choose which to admire. Linger and enjoy both! On the East Mesa pathway, find the appropriately named 'mules ears' (*Wyethia elata*) with its large fuzzy green leaves. Also up on the Mesa is the California Cultivar Garden where the Jock Brydon Rhododendron (*Rhododendron* 'Jock Brydon') is drawing visitors with its orange-streaked flowers. Down in the California Communities, thickleaf Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*) is blooming. Its lavender flowers and its large woolly gray leaves make it a very handsome shrub. In the SoCal Gardens below the Mesa, the hollyleaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*) has started flowering and soon will develop fruits devoured by all sorts of critters in late summer. In the same area, the bright green succulent, dudleya (*Dudleya virens*), is showing off its delicate flower clusters arranged on long stems.



Wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma multiflorum*), Jock Brydon Rhododendron (*Rhododendron* 'Jock Brydon'), mules ears' (*Wyethia elata*). Photos courtesy of CalBG.

## INLAND EMPIRE

---

The Inland Empire offers a special treat for wildflower hunters along Bautista Road between Hemet and Anza, including the burn area from the Fairview Fire of September, last year. It is fabulous! You can see a diversity of flowering plants just walking very short distances from the car, almost entirely along the road. But really, what fun is that? Hike a little farther at two stops mentioned here and experience the full beauty of spring in both the mature chaparral and post fire chaparral. The first stop is just southeast of Hemet at Stetson and Fairview Avenues. About 3 miles south on Fairview Ave, the road becomes Bautista Canyon Road. The first stop has at least 20 species in bloom, including gorgeous fields of Parry's larkspur (*Delphinium parryi*) many pinkish-purple Mexican onion (*Allium peninsulare*), globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), showy yellow sun cups (*Camissoniopsis bistorta*) and, dotting the landscape, white cryptantha (*Cryptantha intermedia*). Chaparral gilia (*Gilia angelensis*), whispering bells (*Emmenanthe penduliflora*), canterbury bells (*Phacelia minor*), splendid mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*) and orange fire poppies (*Papaver heterophyllum*) are blooming profusely as well. This burn area continues for another 4.5 miles. Along the way there are fields of Coulter's snapdragon (*Antirrhinum coulteri*) each with many white flowers on a tall stalk; fields of pink splendid mariposa lilies (*Calochortus splendens*), wide throated yellow monkeyflower (*Diplacus brevipes*); swathes of

prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*), yellow pincushion (*Chaenactis glabriuscula*), and short lobed phacelia (*Phacelia brachyloba*). You can spend hours making multiple stops along the road, feasting on beautiful plants in bloom. Bautista Canyon Road is paved almost to the end of the burn area, which is just past the Bautista Conservation Camp #36. The show of wildflowers continues up the unpaved, but good, road in the unburned landscape. That unpaved road can be traversed by any passenger car since it is well graded, with no difficult places. Immediately on entering this unburned mature chaparral, there is a large display of Parish's woolly blue curls (*Trichostema parishii*) making purple patches throughout the chaparral. A blue haze of Chinese houses (*Collinsia* spp.) and larkspurs (*Delphinium patens*) is covering one large area, and the bushy western lupine (*Lupinus formosus*) was in good bloom in two spots. Yellow bush penstemon (*Keckelia antirrhinoides*) is in full bloom and splattered throughout the blue-purple canvas of flowers.



Parish's woolly blue curls (*Trichostema parishii*), short lobed phacelia (*Phacelia brachyloba*), Mexican onion (*Allium peninsulare*). Photos by Don Rideout.

## URBAN LOS ANGELES

---

Spring just gets better and better at [\[CHECK OUT THIS VIDEO!\]](#), Elizabeth Learning Center! The Desert Habitat Garden impresses with paper bag bush (*Scutellaria mexicana*), wine-cup clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*), beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris* var. *basilaris*), 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*), catclaw (*Senegalia greggii*), 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 delights with alkali mariposa lily (*Calochortus striatus*), San Diego mesa mint (*Pogogyne abramsii*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), toothed calicoflower, (*Downingia cuspidata*), thread leaved

brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), chaparral prickly pear (*Opuntia oricola*), gum plant (*Grindelia camporum*), San Diego ceanothus (*Ceanothus cyaneus*), golden-spined cereus (*Bergerocactus emoryi*), Nuttall's snapdragon (*Antirrhinum nuttallianum*), 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*), 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 their Chaparral Habitat Garden include Mormon tea (*Ephedra viridis*), fairy lantern (*Calochortus albus*), splendid mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*), Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), chaparral brodiaea (*Brodiaea jolonensis*), island barberry (*Berberis pinnata* ssp. *insularis*), southern mountain misery (*Chamaebatia australis*), southern california black walnut (*Juglans californica*), matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), 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](mailto:gtn5586@lausd.net) . His conference period is 10:30am - 12:20pm. Or a visit can be arranged after 3:30 when school is out.



Chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), paper bag bush (*Scutellaria mexicana*). Photos by George Nanoski.

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on Friday, May 26th and check back each week for the most up to date information on southern California wildflower regions to visit.



# NATIVE PLANT AND WILD FLOWER EVENTS

## THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION

---

### **WESTERN MONARCHS: CREATING HABITAT WITH NATIVE PLANTS | 4 PM - 6 PM | MAY 26**

Join us in understanding about their life cycle and needs in this informative class. Learn the in-depth the unique connection between the western population of monarchs and California native plants, and how to attract and nurture these iconic butterflies. Learn which native milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) are best for the caterpillars and which flowering plants provide nectar for adults — with tips on butterfly garden design and maintenance.

[westernmonarchs.eventbrite.com](https://westernmonarchs.eventbrite.com)

### **NATIVE PLANT WATER GARDENING IN CONTAINERS WITH ANDREW CHAVES | 1 PM - 3 PM | JUNE 3**

In this class, we will explore the world of small-scale water gardening, focusing on how to create and maintain a beautiful and sustainable water garden using native California plants. Water gardening is a unique and rewarding way to add natural beauty and serenity to any outdoor space, and it is an excellent way to incorporate both native plants and water sources for wildlife. With the use of containers, we can create water gardens in small spaces, patios, and even on balconies.

[nativeplantwatergardens.eventbrite.com](https://nativeplantwatergardens.eventbrite.com)

## IDYLLWILD NATURE CENTER

---

### **LEMON LILY FESTIVAL | JUNE 24 or JULY 15**

Something to look forward to this summer ! Predicting when the lemon lilies will bloom in the San Jacinto Mountains and scheduling the festival to correspond with that bloom is always a tough call. The lilies have appeared later this year, so it is presumed that they will bloom later as well. As a consequence, the festival may be scheduled on July 15 instead of the June 24 date that was first reported.