



THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION
for Wild Flowers & Native Plants

Wild Flower Hotline

Call 818-768-1802 ext 7 | Weekly Updates, March-May

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.

March 7, 2025

ENJOY RESPONSIBLY!

While California's 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 always...

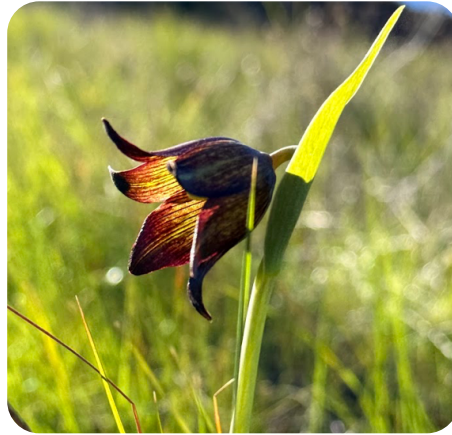
- ✿ Stay on designated trails.
- ✿ Stay out of burn areas.
- ✿ Share the trails; be respectful of others.
- ✿ Do not collect or step on wildflowers.
- ✿ Remember your experiences through photos and leave no trace.
- ✿ Visit on weekdays and/or off-peak hours, if possible.

On behalf of Theodore Payne Foundation and myself, we must acknowledge that friends and field reporters are among those living in the San Gabriel and Santa Monica Mountains who have been devastatingly impacted by the recent LA region wildfires. Many favorite wildflower viewing sites and trails are also closed indefinitely. In addition, cuts in federal funding for employees working on public lands (National Parks, Forest Service, National Monuments, BLM, etc.) will result in reduction of the amount of information provided to us about wildflower blooms in SoCal regions. The long drought has also exacerbated the impact of these events. The little rainfall we have had recently may be "too little, too late." We are resolved, however, to seek out and report wildflower sightings wherever it is safe and accessible. We hope to provide opportunity for experiences that will have the public wondering at the resilience of nature.

Coastal California

The Mariposa Trail in the [Irish Hills Natural Reserve](#) in San Luis Obispo County, wildflowers are beginning to exhibit an early bloom. Colorful species should add to the display over the next few weeks if predicted storms release more life-giving rainfall. Look for the earliest of California's wildflowers red maids (*Calandrinia menziesii*), milkmaids (*Cardamine californica*), blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), chocolate lily (*Fritillaria biflora*), hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathaceae*), shooting stars (*Primula*

clevelandii), buttercups (*Ranunculus* sp.) and California golden violet (*Viola pedunculata*). Not a flowering plant, but the gold back fern (*Pentagramma triangularis*) provides a lush green background for the nearby flowering beauties.



Milkmaids (*Cardamine californica*), chocolate lily (*Fritillaria biflora*), gold back fern (*Pentagramma triangularis*). Photos by Emily Sluiman.

Southern Sierra

The Southern Sierra foothill region was fortunate to have good mid-winter rainfall and wildflowers should be good throughout the spring. Redbuds (*Cercis occidentalis*) are coming into bloom and dot the hills and slopes with their fuchsia pink blossoms. Eastman's fiddleneck (*Amsinckia eastwoodiae*) and popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys nothofulvus*) is seen speckling the hillsides with golden yellow and white colors in many areas. Silver bush lupines (*Lupinus albifrons*) are also starting their striking blue upon silver [foliage] bloom. Here and there on north facing steep hillsides, shooting stars (*Primula clevelandii* var. *patula*) are in early bloom. Location and maps for hiking this area [can be obtained here](#).



Redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*). Photo by Michael Wall.

Along a short 11-mile stretch of Hwy 223 between Arvin and Hwy 58, some wildflowers were observed growing in the pastoral landscapes. While not in abundance, there are nice displays of lupine (*Lupinus* spp.), fiddleneck (*Amsinckia* sp.) and popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys* sp.). Please be cautious and pull off the road if you want to inspect flowers more closely.

San Gabriel Mountain and Foothill Region

At the [California Botanic Garden](#) (CalBG) in Claremont, springtime buds and blooms are awakening from their winter dormancy. Plants along the maze of picturesque trails include desert globemallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), ceanothus (*Ceanothus* spp. and cultivars), California redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*), California buttercup (*Ranunculus californicus*), sticky monkeyflower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*), and many fragrant sages (*Salvia* spp.). Several different species of perennials belonging to the sunflower family are brightening up the garden with their golden yellow flowers.



Trio of sunflower family members at CalBG. Photos courtesy of CalBG

Low Desert Region

The Hotline usually features [Anza Borrego Desert State Park](#) at the top of the report during the month of March. This year however, the desert is bone dry with no great displays of the usual wildflowers. Perennials have fared a little better, especially along waterways. Hike in Coyote Canyon from second crossing along the water as much as possible, and you may see some indigo bush (*Psoralea emoryi*), white rhatany (*Krameria* sp.), sweetbush (*Bebbia juncea*), silky dalea (*Dalea mollis*), and toluaca (*Datura wrightii*) along with one hardy annual, desert needles (*Palafoxia arida* var. *arida*). If you enjoy hiking in Anza, you may find scattered annuals far into the canyons on north facing slopes tucked in among boulders. You need to expend some effort to find them.



Indigo bush (*Psoralethamnus emoryi*), white rhatany (*Krameria* sp.), desert needles (*Palafoxia arida* var. *arida*).

Photos by Abbyann Sisk.

Urban Los Angeles Region

The Habitat Gardens at [Elizabeth Learning Center](#) responded late due to sporadic rainfall. But, better late than never! With 3.1 inches of rain a few weeks ago, the vernal pools are full and replete with endangered fairy shrimp! The Desert Garden has creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), desert lavender (*Condea emoryi*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), bladderpod (*Cleomella arborea*), brittle bush (*Encelia farinosa*), fiveneedle pricklyleaf (*Thymophylla pentachaeta*), and climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides* var. *hartwegii*).

The Vernal Pools Habitat Garden contains Menzies' fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), "chocolate chip" stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*), school bells, a.k.a. blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), cliff spurge (*Euphorbia misera*), sacred thorn apple (*Datura wrightii*), and Del Mar manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa* ssp. *crassifolia*).

Additional species in the Chaparral Garden include 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*), Baja California bird bush (*Ornithostaphylos oppositifolia*), 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, contact George Nanoski, the Habitat Gardens coordinator via email: gtn5586@lausd.net. His conference period is 2:00pm – 3:30pm on Mondays and Thursdays. Or a visit can be arranged after 3:30 when school is out.



Vernal pool full and replete with endangered fairy shrimp! Baja California bird bush (*Ornithostaphylos oppositifolia*), Santa Rosa Island sage (*Salvia brandegeei*). Photos by George Nanoski.

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on Friday, March 14th and check back each week for the most up-to-date information on Southern California wild flower regions to visit!

Native Plant & Wildflower Events Across SoCal

Theodore Payne Foundation

❁ Monarchs & Milkweed: Creating Native Plant Habitats | March 27 | 6–8 PM **ONLINE**

Discover the unique connection between our western population of monarchs and California native plants! For more information and tickets, [visit to our eventbrite page](#).

❁ Alexander Vidal Opening Reception | From Coast to Crest | March 29 | 3–5 PM **FREE**

From Coast to Crest is a new exhibition featuring Alexander's studies of the wildlife across Los Angeles in ink and paint. [RSVP here](#).

❁ Native Plant Garden Tour | April 5 & 6 | 10 AM–5 PM

Taking place April 5th and 6th, 2025, the Native Plant Garden Tour is a two-day, self-guided tour across Greater Los Angeles. Since 2003, more than 700 public and private landscapes have participated in the Native Plant Garden Tour. Ranging from coastal container gardens to experimental urban homesteads, each unique design offers beauty and critical habitat for wildlife. The gardens on this tour contain at least 50 percent native plants. [Get tickets & gear here!](#)

South Pasadena Nature Park

❁ Sustainability Fair, Plant Swap, and Garden Tour | March 29 | 1–4 PM **FREE**

Garden Tour of Friends of South Pasadena Nature Park. Native Plant Gardening Talk and Plant Swap. For more information go to: southpasbeautiful.org/newsandevents/2025/3/29/sustainability-fair