



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 online 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 18, 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.

April is Native Plant Month and Earth Day celebrations are taking place this week. Gather family and friends and spend some time at these amazing California outdoor venues. Get out there and make merry in California's native plant habitats!

Coastal California

In the Coast Ranges of California at [Pinnacles National Park](#) you will be greeted by lovely patches of silver bush lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*) in bloom along the eastern portal. Depending on the trail you choose, and there are many, you can find a variety of spring blooms. For example, from the Bear Gulch Nature center, hike the Moses Springs trail up to the Bear Gulch reservoir. It is a nice trail with woodsy areas, caves, and cliffs with beautiful views! Bush monkey flower (*Diplacus* sp.) is in bloom along the trail, peeping out from crevices in the rocks. Miner's lettuce (*Claytonia* sp.) is plentiful, forming little carpets in shadier areas. There is also some hedge nettle (*Stachys bullata*), fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*) and purple pagodas (*Collinsia heterophylla*). At the top, if you pass the reservoir and start up to the Rim Trail, there are some little bunches of blue dicks. Oh, did I mention the beautiful views of the Park and beyond? And maybe a glimpse of a rare Condor circling above!



Silver bush lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*), Bush monkey flower (*Diplacus* sp.), hedge nettle (*Stachys bullata*). Photos by Katie Tilford.

Los Padres National Forest

A few weeks ago, we reported on the devastation left by the Lake Fire last summer on [Figueroa Mountain](#) in the Los Padres National Forest. Notably, poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and lupines (*Lupinus* spp.) were emerging from the blackened landscape. While many mature trees and shrubs perished, the wildflower display currently is beyond belief! Look for the fire followers, fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), goldfields (*Lasthenia* spp.), globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), Mariposa lily (*Calochortus* sp.), miner's lettuce (*Claytonia* sp.), red skinned onion (*Allium haematochiton*), various phacelias (*Phacelia* spp.), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), chocolate lily (*Fritillaria bicolor*), yellow monkeyflower (*Diplacus brevipes*), sky lupine (*Lupinus nanus*), wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum*), California golden violet (*Viola pedunculata*) and many more. Some perennials are making their way back as well including silver bush lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) and bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*). Make the effort to visit before the weather gets hot.

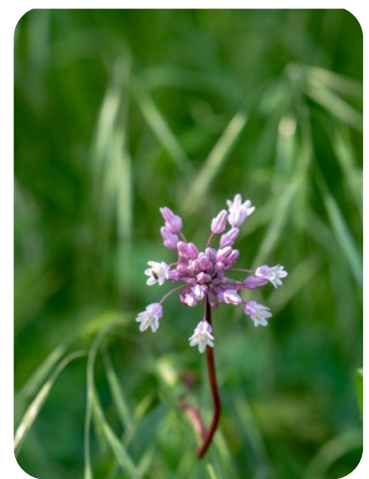


Chia (*Salvia columbariae*), chocolate lily (*Fritillaria bicolor*), lupine patch in burn area, California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and lupines (*Lupinus* sp.). Photos by Don Vogt.

Southern Sierra Foothills

Driving around Lake Kaweah in the southern Sierra foothills east of Visalia, the landscape is transitioning from early to mid-spring blooms. Eastwood's fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia eastwoodiae*) are fading, and the hillsides are shifting from deep gold to the brilliant yellow of spring flowering madia (*Madia elegans*). Don't look for them after 1:00 pm however, as on sunny days this is when they close for their afternoon's rest until waking at next day's dawn! Surprisingly early this year, the harbingers of summer—speckled clarkia (*Clarkia cylindrica* subsp. *clavicaarpa*), are already starting to make bold splashes of pink on the sunnier slopes. Amidst the pinks and yellow, are occasional golden yellow fields of foothill poppy (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*), and pale blue fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum*). Here and there purple pagodas (*Collinsia heterophylla*) in their royal purple add to this colorful oak woodland landscape. Annual lupines of two varieties, spider lupine (*Lupinus benthamii*)

and miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*) decorate the roadsides and gentle slopes in varying shades of blues. Around the lake, the silver bush lupine floral show is fading as the now developing seed pods are growing fat and plump. Taking their place on steep rocky and shadier north facing slopes are the bold yellow bush monkey flower (*Diplacus calycina*). If you drive slowly you will see amongst the monkey flower, clinging into the many tiny cracks and crevices, hundreds of the region's native succulent—the canyon dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa*). Glowing with their bright orange candelabra blooms, they stand out dramatically against their chalky-white foliage. Most of the rock faces preferred by these two plants display a burnished deep orange-red color making for quite an impressive presentation. Most of these mid-spring wildflowers and so much more can be seen and are most easily accessed via the [BLM Case Mountain Recreation Area](#) trail system. Here you will also enjoy many local geophytes in full bloom, including wild hyacinth (*Dipterostemon capitatus*) and its foothill sister species, twining brodiaea (*Dipterostemon volubile*), pretty face (*Triteleia ixioides*), and its taller sister, Ithuriel's spear (*Triteleia laxa*). While there are not a great many Calochortus in this part of the southern oak woodland it is one of the very best places to find the elegant, and arguably the queen of Calochortus, pink fairy lanterns (*Calochortus amoenus*). Also coming into mid-spring bloom on sunny slopes and trail sides are diminutive blooming Heermann's golden sunburst (*Pseudobahia heermannii*), bird's-eye gilia (*Gilia capitata*), tom cat clover (*Trifolium willdenovii*) and mustang clover (*Leptosiphon montanus*).



Madia (*Madia elegans*), speckled clarkia (*Clarkia cylindrica* subsp. *clavicularpa*), dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa*), mustang clover (*Leptosiphon montanus*), Heermann's golden sunburst (*Pseudobahia heermannii*), pretty face (*Triteleia ixioides*), twining brodiaea (*Dipterostemon volubile*). Photos by Michael Wall.

San Gabriel Mountain and Foothill Region

The iconic colors of California—the rich golds and blues—are unfurling through the gardens at the [Theodore Payne Foundation](#). Joining the California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), fiddlenecks (*Amsinckia menziesii*), sunflowers (*Helianthus annuus*) and California sun cups (*Camissoniopsis bistorta*) are, this week, the Palo Verde trees (*Parkinsonia florida*) now in glorious bloom. This palette of yellows is now coupled with desert bluebells (*Phacelia campanularia*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*) several sage species (*Salvia* spp.) and the electric blue showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*). Cheery yellow blossoms of bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), canyon sunflower (*Venegasia carpesioides*) and Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*) are brightening up pathways everywhere. Trekking up Wildflower Hill adjacent to the sales yard, you will encounter fragrant Cedros Island verbena (*Verbena lilacina*), woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) and California four o'clock (*Mirabilis laevis*). Enjoy this explosion of color and by the way, many of these can also be purchased at the TPF nursery!

The Mesa pathways at the [California Botanic Garden](#) are awash in color from large swaths of Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*) and Pacific Coast hybrid (PCH) irises. A diverse range of color and patterns can exist among these irises ranging from orchid, lavender, deep purple–red, blue, violet, cream, buff, or apricot. The falls (three downward curving petals of iris) are patterned with veins of brown, maroon, or red, and often have yellow spots in the throat. The effect of this bloom is dramatic but lasts for only a few weeks, so visit now! Elsewhere on the Mesa even more hues of blue emanate from various lupines (*Lupinus* sp.), fragrant sages (*Salvia* spp.), little purple houses (*Collinsia heterophylla*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), assorted phacelias (*Phacelia* spp.) and the many lovely ceanothus (*Ceanothus* spp.). Low to the ground, the upturned faces of sunny yellow Southern sun cups (*Camissoniopsis bistorta*) can be found in many open areas of the garden. Check out the desert displays for blooming Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*), and the hot pink flowers of beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*). Elsewhere in the Garden, and adding to all this color drama, are stands of the big, bold Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*).



Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*), bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*). Photos courtesy of CalBG.

Orange County

Last week we noted the flower bloom along some trails at [Casper's Regional Park](#) in Orange County. Many more beauties have come to our attention since then. Along the Dick Loskotn Trail, look for Catalina mariposa lilies (*Calochortus catalinae*) in small numbers, wild canterbury bells (*Phacelia minor*), San Diego jewel flower (*Caulanthus heterophyllus*), Padre shooting stars (*Primula clevelandii* var. *clevelandii*), and a few lovely chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*). The West Ridge Trail has a large, blooming Clematis vine (*Clematis* sp.) and scattered baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*). On the Starr Rise Trail search for the cute California golden violet (*Viola pedunculata*). More shooting stars can be found in a large field seen from Sun Rise Trail. Hurry to see them as the recent hot weather will hasten their bloom. Chaparral gilia (*Gilia angelensis*) and blue dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*) are dominating some areas. Look also for paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.), lupine (*Lupinus* sp), popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys* sp.), and some huge chalk dudleya (*Dudleya pulverulenta*). There are spectacular vistas of Orange County's wildlands from the ridges as well.



California golden violet (*Viola pedunculata*), Catalina mariposa lilies (*Calochortus catalinae*). Photos by Laura Camp.

San Diego County

A few miles southeast, as the crow flies (but unfortunately no easy direct road for humans) from Caspers in Orange County to San Diego County just north of Fallbrook, one can enjoy hiking in the [Santa Margarita River](#)

Trail Preserve. The Wildlands Conservancy in partnership with Fallbrook Trails Council maintain equestrian and hiking trails along the oak- and sycamore-shaded Santa Margarita River. The SMR is one of the last free-flowing wild rivers in Southern California and the southernmost range of steelhead trout. The plants along the SMR South trail are lush. There are annuals, both native and [unfortunately] non-native, galore, including large swaths of fiesta flower (*Pholistoma auritum* var. *auritum*). In many places the fiesta flowers are only in bud but when these plants do bloom, the blue wash of color will be spectacular. Take caution during your walk as there are several poison oak plants in flower and looking very, very happy. Fortunately, the trails here are trimmed for horse traffic, so the poison oak is well away from the center of the trail. The most beautiful and abundant blooms are from hoary leaf ceanothus (*Ceanothus crassifolius*). There are complete hillsides of it in bloom! There are also some stunning plants of Ramona lilac (*Ceanothus tomentosus* var. *olivaceus*) in full bloom. The beguiling fragrance of these two ceanothus species hangs in the air. There is a trail spur off the SMR South called the 500 Foot Trail. It follows a railroad route carved out in the 1880s. Its steep banks are delightful with lots of bank-loving plants, such as ferns and Jepsonia (*Jepsonia* sp.). The trail parallels the river at 500-foot elevation (thus the name 500 Foot Trail) and transverses chaparral habitat. As with Caspers Regional Park, the vistas from the 500 Foot trail is worth the hike.



The vista of the Santa Margarita River Trail Preserve from the 500 Foot trail. Photo by Don Rideout.

Urban Los Angeles Region

The wildflower show keeps getting better at the **Elizabeth Learning Center**. The gigantic creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) and San Diego ceanothus (*Ceanothus cyaneus*) are in glorious FULL BLOOM and smell amazing! There is also an Arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*) "super bloom" happening in front of the on-campus Community Health Clinic! The Desert Garden has fish-hook cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis* var. *villosa*), miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), desert lavender (*Condea emoryi*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), brittle bush (*Encelia farinosa*), fiveneedle pricklyleaf (*Thymophylla pentachaeta*), and climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides* var. *hartwegii*). The Vernal Pools Habitat Garden delights with toothed calicoflower (*Downingia cuspidata*), Orcutt's quillwort

(*Isoetes orcuttii*), truncate leaf lupine (*Lupinus truncatus*), golden spined cereus (*Bergerocactus emoryi*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), Menzies' fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), "chocolate chip" stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*), school bells (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), cliff spurge (*Euphorbia misera*), spine shrub (*Adolphia californica*), and Del Mar manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa* ssp. *crassifolia*). Additional species in the Chaparral Garden include fairy lantern (*Calochortus albus*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), chaparral brodiaea (*Brodiaea jolonensis*), matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), Orcutt's hazardia (*Hazardia orcuttii*), Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*), island barberry (*Berberis pinnata* ssp. *insularis*), pink fairy duster (*Calliandra eriophylla*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), rooreh (*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.





Chaparral brodiaea (*Brodiaea jolonensis*), toothed calicoflower (*Downingia cuspidata*), fairy lantern (*Calochortus albus*), Arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), San Diego ceanothus (*Ceanothus cyaneus*), Green Lynx spider (*Peucetia viridans*), Santa Rosa Island sage (*Salvia brandegeei*). Photos by George Nanoski.

That's it for this week. Look for our next report on Friday, April 25 and check back each week for the most up-to-date information on Southern California wildflower regions to visit!

Wild Flower & Native Plant Events Across SoCal

Theodore Payne Foundation

🌸 Poppy Days Sale | April 18 & 19 | 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Make your garden pop for spring! Members receive a 15% discount and non-members receive a 10% discount on all plants, seeds, and Theodore Payne Foundation gear. Reserve a parking reservation [here](#).

California Native Plant Society: San Gabriel Mountains Chapter

🌸 BioBlitz at Tameobit Wildlife Sanctuary (Lake Los Angeles) | April 18

For information, details, maps, registration visit [here](#).

🌸 Guided Walk at the Prime Desert Woodland Preserve | April 19

For information, details, maps, registration visit [here](#).

🌸 Invasive plant removal at the Prime Desert Woodland Preserve | April 22

For information, details, maps, registration visit [here](#).

🌸 Plant ID Presentation at the Lancaster Library | April 25

For information, details, maps, registration visit [here](#).

California Native Plant Society: Riverside/San Bernadino Chapter

🌸 "It's the End of the Lawn as We Know It . . . And I Feel Fine" with Denise Mitchell | April 19 | 10 AM

In-person and online meeting. Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District, Bldg. F. 4500 Glenwood Drive, Riverside, CA 92501. Free parking. For information see: [here](#). To join via Zoom, please register [here](#).

Wild Flower & Native Plant Events Across SoCal

Friends of the South Pasadena Nature Park

🌸 April Volunteer Day | April 19 | 9 AM – 12 PM

Volunteers will prune, remove weeds, and tidy up the park. Where: 100 block of Pasadena Avenue in South Pasadena, east of York Blvd. Bridge.

The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy

🌸 ReWild Ojai Garden Tour | April 26 | 9 AM – 3 PM

Annual garden tour in the Ojai Valley with home gardens that feature California native plants. More information [here](#).

California Native Plant Society: LA/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter

🌸 Bioblitz Stunt Ranch Santa Monica Mountains Reserve | May 10 | 9:30 AM – 1 PM

Your chance to get to the Santa Monica Mountains this spring! Join us at UCLA Stunt Ranch Santa Monica Mountains Reserve for our Spring Biodiversity Bioblitz. Reservations required via the link at the bottom of this [information page](#).