



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.

## May 9, 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.

In Southern California, the cool weather we have been having is extending the spring bloom. Plan an escape to the outdoors with Mom for Mother's Day!

### Southern Sierra Foothill Region

---

With a massive bloom of speckled clarkia (*Clarkia cylindrica*), spring is winding down in the foothill country of the southern Sierra. Intermingling with the speckled clarkia, the Spring Madia (*Madia elegans*) are still in bloom. Also prominent both along the highways and the trails are the fragrant California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) in early to mid bloom, an abundance of bright yellow rock bush monkey flower (*Diplacus calycinus*), and creamy white blooms of blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*). Along the trails one will still find colorful patches of mustang clover (*Leptosiphon montanus*) and the elegant Ithuriel's spear (*Triteleia laxa*). While the speckled clarkia is the one most impressive, two other farewell-to-spring species are found here and announcing the long hot quiet summer season: elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*) and the lovely four spot clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*).





Top row: speckled clarkia (*Clarkia cylindrica*). Second row: California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*). Third row: yellow rock monkey flower (*Diplacus calycinus*) and blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*). Fourth row: mustang clover (*Leptosiphon montanus*), lthuriel's spear (*Triteleia laxa*). Fifth Row: four spot clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*), elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*). Bottom row: spring madia (*Madia elegans*) mixed with speckled clarkia (*Clarkia cylindrica*). Photos by Michael and Stephanie Wall.

## Los Padres National Forest

---

At [Figueroa Mountain](#), it's "hide and seek" wildflowering in several places where the maturing tall grasses concealed many individual blooms. But for those willing to search, the mountain holds several flowering finds. Bouquets of small white Creamcups (*Platystemon californicus*), scattered purple Winecup Clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*) and pink Checker Bloom (*Sidalcea malviflora*), and a vibrant hillside of Dudleya (*Dudley* sp.). Very visible were white Globe Gilia (*Gilia capitata*) mixed with vivid lupine (*Lupinus* sp.).

In areas burned by the Station Fire, annuals are taking full advantage of the lack of competition for resources like water and sunlight. The bright orange poppy (*Eschscholzia* sp.) and the blankets of blue-white lupine (*Lupinus* sp.) coat the hillsides in the burned scar, contrasting with the charred skeletons of oaks and pines and the ash-covered ground. Nature's resilience is evident as almost every fire-blackened tree and bush has fresh green growth at its base.



Dudleya (*Dudleya* sp.), lupine (*Lupinus* sp.) mixed with globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), checker bloom (*Sidalcea malviflora*), creamcups (*Platystemon californicus*), winecups (*Clarkia purpurea*), oak regrowth. Photos by Don Vogt.

## San Gabriel Mountain and Foothill Region

---

At the [Theodore Payne Foundation](#), late season wildflowers have emerged: globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*), and winecups (*Clarkia purpurea*). Showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*) is still a prolific bloomer decorating TPF's gardens in vivid purple. The pink flowering Violet penstemon (*Penstemon x parishii*) are dotting the various demonstration gardens. More Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*) flowers have opened along the parking lot and are inviting visitors to explore more in the garden. Chia (*Salvia columbariae*) can be found blooming around the demonstration gardens, Wildflower Hill, and the sales yard

along with California brittlebush (*Encelia californica*), common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), many sages (*Salvia* spp. and cultivars), Elizabeth bush anemone (*Carpenteria californica* 'Elizabeth'), and mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*). Coastal cholla cactus (*Cylindropuntia prolifera*), prickly pear (*Opuntia littoralis*) and beavertail (*Opuntia basilaris*) are also very showy around the nursery. In the understory of the gardens' mature trees and shrubs, Douglas irises (*Iris douglasiana*) are still showcasing a rainbow of colors, along with the deep pink pom-poms of the red flowering buckwheat (*Eriogonum grande* var. *rubescens*).



Globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*), Coastal cholla cactus (*Cylindropuntia prolifera*), red flowering buckwheat (*Eriogonum grande* var. *rubescens*), mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*). Photos by Peri Litvak.

Some spectacularly colorful plants are in bloom at the [California Botanic Garden](#). Heading the list of unusual colors is the sulfur yellow Conejo buckwheat (*Eriogonum crocatum*). Electric and royal blues, bright pinks, lavenders are represented by several penstemons (*Penstemon* spp.), and an array of sages (*Salvia* spp.). Pretty but prickly are colorful hedgehog cactus (*Echinocereus coccineus*), cholla cactus species (*Cylindropuntia* spp.), prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia littoralis*), and beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*). Evening primrose (*Oenothera* spp.), phlox species (*Leptosiphon* spp.), yucca (*Hesperoyucca* and *Yucca* spp.) and agave (*Agave* spp.) are quite dramatic even if they are dressed "only" in white blossoms!

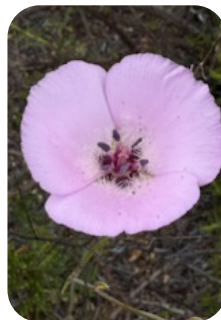


Conejo buckwheat (*Eriogonum crocatum*), phlox species (*Leptosiphon* spp.), blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) a sage relative. Photos courtesy of CalBG.

## Inland Empire

---

The [La Alba Trail along the Murrieta Hogbacks](#) runs adjacent to the Santa Rosa Plateau. Unlike the relatively easy to moderate trails of the Plateau, the La Alba hiking loop is more challenging, but rewards with the iconic sights, sounds and fragrance of pristine coastal sage scrub, one of the most cherished plant communities in California. Everything is in full bloom. Keystone species like black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) and deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*) are in prolific bloom and attracting pollinators. Nice pockets of wildflowers include Mariposa lily (*Calochortus* sp.), baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*), goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*), and phacelia (*Phacelia* spp.). It is also a habitat that is popular for birders.



Black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) and the Hogbacks, splendid mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*). Photos by Emily Sluiman.

---

**That's it for this week. Look for our next report on Friday, May 16th 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

---

### 🌸 Botany for Gardeners: Three-Part Series with Valerie Wong | May 16, 23, & 30 | 4:30 PM

Join us for this fascinating online series exploring how the plants in your garden are adapted to water, light, air, and soil. Purchase tickets [here](#).

## California Native Plant Society: LA/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter

---

### 🌸 Big Tujunga Wash at Orcas Park | May 10 | 9 AM

This two-hour, two-mile hike on equestrian trails will traverse pristine upland and riparian habitat within Hansen Dam flood control basin. Meet at Orcas Park, at the third paved parking lot past the horse park entrance, accessed from Foothill Blvd. and Orcas Ave., midway between I-210 freeway exits at Osborne Street and Wheatland Ave. Send questions to Bill Neill at [bgneill@earthlink.net](mailto:bgneill@earthlink.net).

### 🌸 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](#).

## Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

---

### 🌸 Nature Walk at Elings Park | May 10 | 9 AM – 10:30 AM

Introduction to the iNaturalist plants for pollinators project. Free. Meet at Elings Park – 1298 Las Positas Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93105. The group will meet in the softball field's parking lot. To access Elings Park site map using this [link](#).

### 🌸 Oso Flaco Lake & Dunes Day Trip | May 16 | 9 AM – 1 PM

Experience the wildflowers of Oso Flaco Lake, located at the border of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties, with botanist Steve Junak. Details [here](#).