



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 30, 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.

San Gabriel Mountain Foothills

Just in time to get a mention in the last report of 2025, two exquisite new plants serendipitously blossomed this week in the Theodore Payne Foundation gardens. One is the Humboldt lily (*Lilium humboldtii*), a tall, slim beauty arising from a bulb and growing sometimes to 8 feet. It is bejeweled with large orange flowers stippled with maroon splotches. Watch the hummingbirds flock to it! The other plant starting to bloom in the garden is mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*). The perfumed citrusy fragrance beguiles visitors to swoon over masses of lovely white blossoms extended from long, arched branches. It is a handsome shrub and one of California's most fragrant plants. Just inside the nursery entrance, make sure to look up or you might miss the Burgundy desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis* 'Burgundy') beginning to bloom. Other areas of the gardens still have perennial favorites blooming into late spring, early summer including the ever-cheery sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*), Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), and our favorite flower from early spring to early summer, the California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). Make sure to carefully inspect the narrowleaf milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*) in the border plantings along the parking lot to spot Monarch butterfly caterpillars.



Burgundy desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis* 'Burgundy'), Humboldt lily (*Lilium humboldtii*), Monarch butterfly caterpillars on narrowleaf milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*). Photos by Hannah Perez. Mock orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*). Photo by Peri Litvak.

Los Padres National Forest

Back in March when we first reported on the wildflower awakening on Figueroa Mountain in the Los Padres National Forest, there wasn't hope for a super display this year. A wildfire had scourged the area in July of 2024. Certainly, some post fire annuals would show up, but with so much devastation and little winter rainfall, it was thought that wildflowers would be sparse and short-lived. A different story emerged, however. A field reporter returned to Figueroa Mountain five times over the spring to photo document an amazing wildflower succession over two months. You have read these chronicles in TPF's Wildflower Hotline reports this spring. The fifth trip last week found, once again, the wildflower display was good with a variety of new species replacing the earlier spring blooms. Most of the California poppy and purple lupine displays have faded, as have the chia, blue dick, globe gilia and fiesta flowers. Instead, the displays included several late-season flowers. The lovely ruby chalice clarkia (*Clarkia rubicunda*), showy elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unquiculata*), California hedge nettle (*Stachys bullata*), California cudweed (*Pseudognaphalium californicum*), Catalina Mariposa lily (*Calochortus catalinae*),

butter lupine (*Lupinus luteolus*), pacific pea (*Lathyrus vestitus*), purple pagodas (*Collinsia heterophylla*), fringed onion (*Allium fimbriatum*), miner's lettuce (*Claytonia* sp.), common phacelia (*Phacelia distans*) and scorpion weed (*Phacelia* sp.) were widespread. The presence of so many clarkias, a.k.a "farewell-to-spring," makes one wonder how long Figueroa Mountain will continue to debut new wildflower species. It was indeed a successful wildflower season on Figueroa Mountain in 2025.



TOP: Elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*), butter lupine (*Lupinus luteolus*), California cudweed (*Pseudognaphalium californicum*).
BOTTOM: Fringed onion (*Allium fimbriatum*), purple pagodas (*Collinsia heterophylla*), ruby chalice clarkia (*Clarkia rubicunda*).
Photos by Don Vogt.

Southern Sierra Foothills

In the foothills of the mighty Sierra Nevada, when the landscape fades to a golden brown and the wildflowers

have mostly progressed to seed, up comes the harvest brodiaea (*Brodiaea elegans*) – the true harbinger of summer. After an industrious spring, for flowers, pollinators and curious posy peepers, the days of rest draw near and longing for the next spring begins.



Harvest brodiaea (*Brodiaea elegans*) in the Sierra Foothills. Photos by Mike Wall.

San Bernardino Mountains

With warmer days has increased the bloom resulting in a canvas of picturesque color at the Oak Glen Preserve! Perfect weather and temperatures in the mid- to upper 70s can be enjoyed while the valleys below are hitting the mid- to upper 90s! The [Southern California Montane Botanic Garden on the Oak Glen Preserve](#) is situated at an elevation of 4,800 feet in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains, so spring arrives later here than elsewhere in the SoCal valleys. The Botanic Garden features more than 150 native wildflowers of the Southern California mountains, with several venues, such as Ruth's Butterfly Garden and Hummingbird Hill, with species selected for their attraction to butterflies and moths and hummingbirds, respectively. But the real attraction for wildflower enthusiasts is the Artist's Palette--a six-acre hillside that used to be covered with weeds is now covered with native wildflowers. A prominent feature is "Sendero del

Sol"--the Trail of the Sun--highlighting a "sun" with 100-feet long white-yellow rays composed of fringed linanthus (*Linanthus dianthiiflorus*), fiddleneck (*Amsinckia intermedia*), tidy-tips (*Layia platyglossa*), sun cups (*Camissoniopsis* spp.) and popcorn flowers (*Cryptantha intermedia*), surrounded by a "sky" of blue and purple flowers comprised of desert bells (*Phacelia campanularia*), tansy-leaved phacelia (*Phacelia tanacetifolia*), Arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*), and purple owl's-clover (*Castilleja exserta*). The Hummingbird Hill venue is also looking good in early bloom with Eaton's firecracker (*Penstemon eatonii*), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) and fuchsia-flowered gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) in good show.

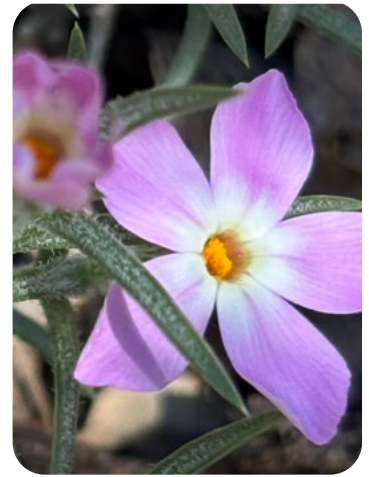


Scenes from Southern California Montane Botanic Garden wildflower displays. Photo by Tim Krantz.

San Jacinto Mountains

Driving along Hwy 74 in the San Jacinto Mountains you will come upon Morris Ranch Road in [Garner Valley](#). The road is lined with flowers in its uphill section, but most were small except for the nice stand of grape soda lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*) at the beginning of the south fork of the San Jacinto River. The Bajada lupine (*Lupinus concinnus* ssp. *optatus*) is in full bloom along the immediate roadside as well. The sunny yellow interior goldenbush (*Ericameria linearifolia*) is starting to lighten up the region while the smaller chia (*Salvia columbariae*) is filling in spaces between them making for a nice purple and yellow color combination. There are pleasing blooms on the lower part of the Cedar Spring Trail, including Davidson's phacelia (*Phacelia*

davidsonii), prickly phlox (*Linanthus californicus*), common cryptantha (*Cryptantha intermedia*), baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*), and strigose lotus, (*Acmispon strigosus*). Cupped leaf ceanothus (*Ceanothus perplexans*), Eastwood manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa*), and pink bracket manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pringlei*) are in lovely bloom there too. On the sun exposed upper part of the trail, wild canterbury bells (*Phacelia minor*) are a delight with to behold dotting the landscape purple-blue color. Near the top of the trail Johnston's rockcress (*Boechera johnstonii*) was in bloom. This area is just starting to bloom well and should be good to visit during the next month or so if it doesn't get too hot.



Pink bracket manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pringlei*), strigose lotus (*Acmispon strigosus*), wild canterbury bells (*Phacelia minor*), prickly phlox (*Linanthus californicus*). Photos by Tom Chester.

San Diego County

At [Cuyamaca Rancho State Park](#), the Airplane Monument Loop Trail (5.3 mile) was filled with flowers, including many annuals, despite this being a half-normal-rainfall year! Summer snow (*Linanthus floribundus*) was present along much of the route. This is an amazing place for gilia and closely related species. We saw a total of eight such species, five *Gilia* species including angel's gilia (*Gilia angelensis*), globe gilia (*Gilia capitata*), volcanic gilia (*Gilia ochroleuca*) and purple spot gilia (*Gilia clivorum*). Fairy lanterns (*Calochortus albus*) are in bloom in great numbers everywhere along the route.



Fairy lantern (*Calochortus albus*). Photo by George Nanoski.

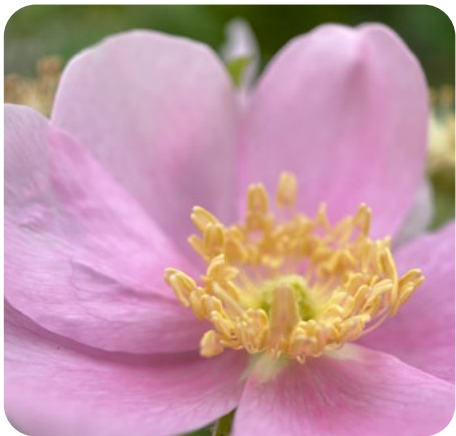
Urban Los Angeles Region

The wildflowers at [Elizabeth Learning Center](#) continue to WOW visitors late into Spring. The gigantic creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), catclaw (*Senegalia greggii*) and blue paloverde (*Cercidium floridum*) are exploding with flowers! The Desert Garden has prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*), turpentine bush (*Ericameria laricifolia*), desert five spot (*Eremalche rotundifolia*), thistle sage (*Salvia carduacea*), violet twining snapdragon (*Maurandella antirrhiniflora*), owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis* var. *villosa*), wine cup clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*), miniature lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), 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 delights with alkali mariposa lily (*Calochortus striatus*), Baja California sage (*Salvia californica*), San Diego mesa mint (*Pogogyne abramsii*), toothed calicoflower (*Downingia cuspidata*), Orcutt's quillwort (*Isoetes orcuttii*), California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*), goldfields (*Lasthenia glabrata*), golden spined cereus (*Bergerocactus emoryi*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), Orcutt's brodiaea (*Brodiaea orcuttii*), Menzies' fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), "chocolate chip" stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*), school bells (*Dipterostemon capitatus*), chaparral prickly pear (*Opuntia oricola*), coastal cholla (*Cylindropuntia prolifera*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), cliff spurge (*Euphorbia misera*), sacred thorn apple (*Datura wrightii*), spine shrub (*Adolphia californica*), and Del Mar manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa* ssp. *crassifolia*).

Additional species in their Chaparral Garden include island ceanothus (*Ceanothus arboreus*), fairy lantern (*Calochortus albus*), splendid mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*), thread leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), yellow evening primrose (*Oenothera elata*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), 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*), California wild rose (*Rosa californica*) and Santa Cruz Island buckwheat (*Eriogonum arborescens*).

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.



Blue paloverde (*Cercidium floridum*), prickly poppy (*Argemone munita*), turpentine bush (*Ericameria laricifolia*), desert five spot (*Eremalche rotundifolia*), climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides* var. *hartwegii*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), Santa Cruz Island buckwheat (*Eriogonum arborescens*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), California wild rose (*Rosa californica*), thread leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), and Hover Fly enjoying it all! Photos by George Nanoski.

That's it for this wild flower season. Look for reports on Fridays, March through May, 2026 for the most up-to-date information on Southern California wildflower regions to visit.

Wild Flower & Native Plant Events Across SoCal

Theodore Payne Foundation

🌸 Sketching Native Wild Flowers with Maryanne Pittman | June 7 | 9:30 – 11:30 AM

Celebrate California's vibrant native wild flowers, honing your artistic skills while delving into their ecological significance. [Sign up here](#)