



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 [sponsorships](#). 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 29, 2026

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.
- ✿ Do not collect or step on wildflowers.
- ✿ Obey posted closures and warnings
- ✿ Share the trails; be respectful of others.
- ✿ Leave no trace.
- ✿ Visit on weekdays and/or off-peak hours, if possible.

Thank you to our 2026 sponsors, Alonzo Wickers and [Cuyama Buckhorn](#).

CENTRAL COAST RANGES

In the Coast Ranges of California at [Pinnacles National Park](#), late spring and early summer bloomers are now dominating the sunny spaces and rocky cliffs along many trails. Blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*) is important to many animals within Pinnacles. Its copious flowers provide nectar for bees and butterflies and its blue-black fruit is eaten by birds and mammals. It can be seen growing as a small tree or large shrub throughout the park. Coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*) is a pungent smelling herb. Abundant lavender flowers top the stalks of this plant and is beloved by many bees and butterflies. See it growing along the roadways and trails in Bear and Condor Gulch areas. California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) grows in coastal sage and chaparral communities and on rocky slopes at Pinnacles. It is variable in appearance, forming a spreading bush approaching as much as two meters in height and three across. Tiny flowers appear in dense, frilly clusters of pink and white. It is particularly attractive to butterflies and bees and is a good source of nectar over many months in drier areas. It is especially noticeable right now along the East Entrance Road of the park. Visitors should keep their eyes peeled close to the ground for the pink inflorescence of Douglas's spineflower (*Chorizanthe douglasii*). This small plant is quite common within the park and can be seen on most trails, but the species is limited to the central coastal mountain ranges

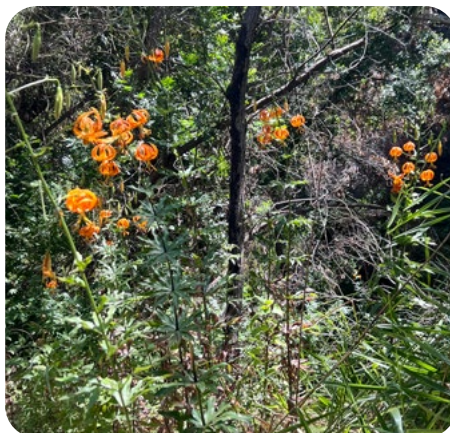
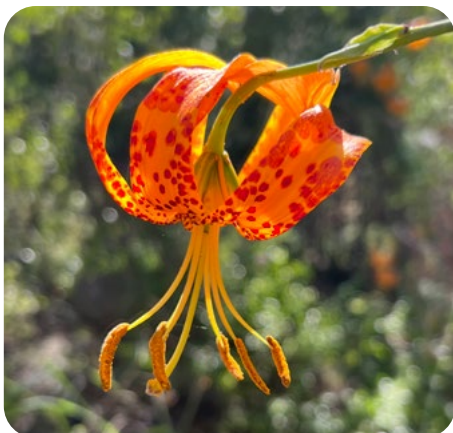
of California. Pinnacles is one of the limited places to see it. The pretty purple dwarf brodiaea (*Brodiaea terrestris* subsp. *kernensis*), also can be found just under-foot on many of the trails as well. Another California endemic plant species found throughout the park now is sticky snapdragon (*Antirrhinum thompsonii*). This plant sends up large, showy spikes of pink flowers, inviting visitors to approach for a closer look. Common yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), one of the most well-known California native plants, recognizable by its feathery leaves and umbrella-like inflorescences composed of many small white flowers, is scattered about in sunny, open places, beckoning many pollinators. Growing among other herbs and grasses is the magenta colored, bowl shaped winecup clarkia (*Clarkia purpurea*). And finally, commonly seen along the road to the Old Pinnacles trailhead, are the red, trumpet-like flowers of the scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*). Once called the “hummingbird’s dinner horn”, the flowers are primarily pollinated by hummingbirds, so look for those flying jewels as well.



Blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*).
Photos by Amelia Ryan.

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

Beautiful Humboldt lilies (*Lilium humboldtii*) are abundant now and can be seen at [Santa Ynez Canyon Waterfall Trail](#) in Topanga Canyon State Park. Best approach to trail is via Palisades Drive to Vereda de la Montura. Go see them! It is exciting to see so many in bloom.



Humboldt lilies (*Lilium humboldtii*). Photos by Sue Lackner.

SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS AND FOOTHILLS

A large plot of narrowleaf milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*) is clearly visible along the Natives Loop at [Descanso Gardens](#). They are not quite open yet, but the buds appear ready to pop within the next couple of days. When the milkweed does come into flower, look for the diverse community of spiders, beetles, bugs, caterpillars, and other insects interacting with each other.



Narrowleaf milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*). Photos by Michael Wall.

SAN BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOREST

The wildflower show has begun in SoCal's Mountain resorts. [Heaps Peak Arboretum](#) in the San Bernardino National Forest has exploded with flowering perennials and annuals. Deer brush (*Ceanothus integerrimus*) is in full bloom along with sticky cinquefoil (*Drymocallis glandulosa*), golden-flowered California flannelbush (*Fremontodendron californicum*), mountain pink currant (*Ribes nevadense*), and many others. The scenic Sequoia Trail is open to visitors and the weather is perfect for an exploratory hike to seek out the lovely few-flowered blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia parviflora*), sulphur buckwheat (*Eriogonum umbellatum*), Hartweg's Iris (*Iris hartwegii*), Grinnell's beardtongue (*Penstemon grinnellii*) and many other pleasing wildflowers.



Few-flowered blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia parviflora*), sulphur buckwheat (*Eriogonum umbellatum*), Grinnell's beardtongue (*Penstemon grinnellii*), Hartweg's Iris (*Iris hartwegii*). Photos by Gina Richmond.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Patches of poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) and scattered Parish's larkspur (*Delphinium parryi*) line the path to the vernal pools at the [Santa Rosa Plateau](#). The seasonal pools have dried up over the last few weeks, and the annual ritual of rare vernal pool flowers have been growing in the desiccated pool basins. Hoover's calicoflower (*Downingia bella*) is now the dominant bloom in the main pool basin and makes a lovely painting of sky-blue color. The main pool is also where new populations of Northern water plantain (*Alisma triviale*) have made their appearance. Elsewhere on the Plateau trails, many late spring bloomers can be spotted including a trio of mariposa lilies—splendid mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*), fairy lantern (*Calochortus albus*) and Weed's mariposa (*Calochortus weedii*). There are several patches of pretty, purple dwarf brodiaea (*Brodiaea terrestris*) in bloom, along with a small number of Santa Rosa basalt brodiaea (*Brodiaea santarosae*). Many heart leaved keckiella (*Keckiella cordifolia*) and foothill penstemon (*Penstemon heterophyllus*) are in bloom on the Adobe Loop trail and attracting hungry hummingbirds. Three spot (*Osmadenia tenella*) is displaying carpets of white in several places, and it smells great. Dense patches of California centaury flower (*Zeltnera venusta*) are covering some sunny, open areas in bright pink color. Other nice, showy species include orange-red cardinal catchfly (*Silene laciniata*) and woolly pod milkweed (*Asclepias eriocarpa*).



Hoover's calicoflower (*Downingia bella*), Weed's mariposa (*Calochortus weedii*), heart leaved keckiella (*Keckiella cordifolia*), cardinal catchfly (*Silene laciniata*). Photos by Emily Sluiman and Tom Chester.

Vista Grande Road/Trail, just north of the [Vista Grande Fire Station](#) on Hwy 243 is lined with mostly pink and lavender wildflowers now. It is an incredible sight! The most common blooms are diamond clarkia (*Clarkia rhomboidei*) and the bright pink splendid gilia (*Saltugilia splendens*). There are probably thousands of plants of these two species. Also present, but in small numbers, are Parikh's threadplant (*Nemacladus parikhiae*) and Mojave linanthus (*Leptosiphon breviculus*). Although there was considerable fire prevention activity

(hacking and felling of shrubs and trees) last fall along the road, most of the area was untouched at ground level, allowing all the many pretty annuals to re-appear. In shaded and moist drainages along the uphill side of the road, Western azalea (*Rhododendron occidentale*) is in bloom and filling the air with a lovely fragrance. Thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*) and Western dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) is in bloom too, as these companion plants all enjoy the same habitat conditions. In the Azalea Creek drainage, the lemon lily stalks all have buds on them. If you are keeping a life-list of observed mariposa lilies (*Calochortus* spp.), stop at nearby Morris Ranch Road off Hwy. 243 where there are still many pink-purple blooms on the Munz's mariposa lily (*Calochortus palmeri* var. *munzii*).



Mojave linanthus (*Leptosiphon breviculus*), Western azalea (*Rhododendron occidentale*), Western dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), splendid gilia (*Saltugilia splendens*). Photos by Silke Gathmann, Don Rideout and Tom Chester.

The nearby [Deer Springs Trail](#) begins on Hwy 243 one mile north of Idyllwild. This is a lovely spot to see thread plant (*Nemacladus longiflorus*) in bloom, which has the largest flowers of all the usual thread plant (*Nemacladus* spp.) species. "Large flower" is a relative term regarding a thread plant. As you can see from the photo below, thread plant is tiny, with thread-like stems that are well camouflaged with the substrate it is growing in. If not focused on looking closely, one can unwittingly step on or over it. There are also oodles of Southern California monkeyflower (*Diplacus fremontii*), Lemmon's linanthus (*Leptosiphon lemmonii*) and golden-rayed pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta aurea*) in bloom.



Thread plant (*Nemacladus longiflorus*), Lemmon's linanthus (*Leptosiphon lemmonii*), golden-rayed pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta aurea*), Southern California monkeyflower (*Diplacus fremontii*). Photos by Don Rideout.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Three trails from the Laguna Mountains Visitor Center, the Pinyon Point loop trail, the Desert View Picnic area, and the Wooded Hill Trail show visitors an exciting array of wildflowers including abundant dusky onion (*Allium campanulatum*) and an expansive field of popcorn flower (*Cryptantha intermedia*) in full bloom. The sheer numbers of these plants are surprising! On the Pinyon Point Trail, look for yellow clustered broomrape (*Aphyllon franciscanum*), a root parasite on California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*). Some other highlights are several flowering plants of American vetch (*Vicia americana*), baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*), San Diego pea (*Lathyrus vestitus* var. *alefeldii*), bush lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), Lewis's flax (*Linum lewisii*), shy mariposa lily (*Calochortus invenustus*), southern Chinese houses (*Collinsia concolor*), diamond clarkia (*Clarkia rhomboidei*), and Parish's larkspur (*Delphinium parishii*).



Dusky onion (*Allium campanulatum*), yellow clustered broomrape (*Aphyllon franciscanum*), shy mariposa lily (*Calochortus invenustus*). Photos by Don Rideout.

URBAN LOS ANGELES REGION

Slender mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracious*) closes out Calochortus season at Elizabeth Learning Center's Habitat Gardens! The Desert Garden continues to wow with creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) and catclaw (*Senegalia greggii*), Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*), silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), turpentine bush (*Ericameria laricifolia*), climbing milkweed (*Funastrum cynanchoides* var. *hartwegii*), desert lavender (*Condea emoryi*), desert wishbone bush (*Mirabilis laevis*), apricot mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), bladderpod (*Cleomella arborea*), and brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*). The Vernal Pools Habitat Garden keeps the show going with variegated dudleya (*Dudleya variegata*), Baja California sage (*Salvia californica*), sacred thorn apple (*Datura wrightii*), male Encinitas baccharis (*Baccharis vanessae*), golden spined cereus (*Bergerocactus emoryi*), San Diego ceanothus (*Ceanothus cyaneus*), San Diego barrel cactus (*Ferocactus viridescens*), coastal cholla (*Cylindropuntia prolifera*), chaparral prickly pear (*Opuntia oricola*), sawtooth goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*), Otay mesa mint (*Pogogyne nudiuscula*), woolly marbles (*Psilocarphus brevissimus*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), cliff spurge (*Euphorbia misera*), and spineshrub (*Adolphia californica*). Additional species in their Chaparral Habitat Garden include slender mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*), island snapdragon (*Antirrhinum nuttallianum*), purple nightshade (*Solanum parishii*), Verity's dudleya (*Dudleya varityi*), Parish's catchfly (*Silene parishii*), San Clemente Island buckwheat (*Eriogonum giganteum* var. *formosum*), California wild rose (*Rosa californica*), Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), California buckwheat

(*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), Orcutt's hazardia (*Hazardia orcuttii*), island ceanothus (*Ceanothus arboreus*), pink fairy duster (*Calliandra eriophylla*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) Santa Rosa Island sage (*Salvia brandegeei*), sugar bush (*Rhus ovata*), 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. For a more immersive visit, contact George Nanoski, the Habitat Gardens coordinator via email: gtn5586@lausd.net.



Parish's catchfly (*Silene parishii*), pink fairy duster (*Calliandra eriophylla*), Santa Rosa Island sage (*Salvia brandegeei*). Photos by George Nanoski.

As we say every week of Hotline season, Theodore Payne Foundation provides Wild Flower Hotline fans updates on locations that are on easily accessible public lands and range from urban to wild, distant to right here in L.A. **In that spirit, we end the season with this final submission:** visit the sidewalk across from the bus stop at Vermont Ave & 29th Street. There you will find a tiny "garden" of California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*), ceanothus (*Ceanothus* sp.), elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unquiculata*) and reportedly seedlings of white sage and monkey flower. Origin of plants unknown but enjoy and smile!



Vermont Street "garden". Photo by Diana Amaya-Chicas

That's it for this year.

The Wildflower Hotline will germinate once again in March 2027. Meanwhile, there are wildflowers everywhere, every season, so get out there and find the many out-of-spring season beauties. Happy botanizing!

WILD FLOWER & NATIVE PLANT

Events Across SoCal

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY CHAPTERS

✿ OC Chapter CNPS | May Events

Join OC CNPS for exciting workshops, programs, and field trips. [More info here.](#)

THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION

✿ Monarchs and Milkweed with Lou Avery Douglas | June 18 | 6 PM–8 PM

Don't miss this last Monarchs & Milkweed class of the milkweed planting season! Learn about the unique connection between the western population of monarchs and California native plants, and how to attract and nurture these iconic butterflies. Class cost is \$33. [Sign up here!](#)

✿ Birding in the Garden: A Walk and Talk with Diego Blanco | June 20 | 9 AM–11 AM

Wander with us through the Theodore Payne Foundation demonstration gardens and Wildflower Hill, where you'll get to know more about the birds that call this place home. On this guided nature walk, your guide will identify local species and explore the important relationships they share with native plants and other wildlife. Class cost is \$38. [Sign up here!](#)

✿ Propagating California Native Plants from Seed with Genevieve Arnold | June 26 | 9 AM–12 PM

Learn the ins and outs of propagating California native plants from seed during the warm season. This hands-on workshop covers basic seed physiology, seed viability, germination cues, pretreatments, sowing and aftercare. Class cost is \$100. [Sign up here!](#)