



Wildflower Hotline

Every Weekend March through May

(818) 768-3533

Welcome to the **29th Annual Wildflower Hotline**, brought to you by the Theodore Payne Foundation, a non-profit plant nursery, seed source, book store, and education center dedicated to the preservation of wildflowers and California native plants. This is the Friday, **May 27 and last** report for the wildflower season.

The end of May brings this season's Wildflower Hotline to a close until March of 2012. Flowers in most low elevation landscapes of the deserts and valleys are depositing their harvest into the soil's seed bank, awaiting winter's rain to start the cycle again. Don't despair, there are still many flowers to see in elevations over 5,000 feet. Given the reports of still-sizable snowpack, there will probably be flowers around all summer. Many of the sites listed below are nice places to take the family for hiking and picnicking over the holiday weekend.

We begin along the Coast of San Diego County, where the [Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve](#) has California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), chamise (*Adenostema fasciculatum*), and bladderpod (*Isomeris arborea*) in peak bloom and painting the landscape with creamy white, pale yellow and pinkish hues. The Rangers at the Park are amazed with this year's blaze of golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*) too—the best they have ever seen. Look for the lavender pink splendid mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*) standing tall in open grassy areas.



Weed's mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii*)
contributed by Laura Camp

Take a hike and have a picnic at [Caspers Wilderness Park](#) off of Hwy 74 in Orange County. The Bell Canyon Trail is an easy hike and offers plenty of opportunities to get pictures with beautiful wildflowers in the background. The sticky-leaf monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) here is especially showy with colors spanning the spectrum from pale yellow through oranges and reds to maroon. In open patches along the trail watch for a very bright pink gentian named Canchalagua (*Zeltnera venusta*). This flower has a “cute factor” of 10! Here too, the showy bulb plants—splendid mariposa lily (*Calochortus splendens*), golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*), and Weed's mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii*) are outstanding

beauties. Other colorful plants along the trails include deerweed

(*Lotus scoparius*), golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*), pearly everlasting (*Gnaphalium* sp.), milkweed (*Asclepias* sp.), paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.) and elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*). The lemonade berry (*Rhus integrifolia*) all have bright red, sticky fruits. Weed's mariposa lily and lance-leaf dudleya (*Dudleya lanceolata*) are abundant along the East Ridge Trail. This trail is steep though, so you will have to work to get there, but well worth the effort.

Continue east on Hwy 74 through the [Cleveland National Forest](#) to Riverside County. Bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*) brightens the slopes and canyon walls with Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.) and bush monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) adding their own warm color hues. If you walk the Tenaja Falls trail, you will enjoy the black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) in full flower wafting its minty aroma through the air. Bush penstemon (*Keckiella antirrhinoides*), penstemons, (*Penstemon* sp.), yucca (*Yucca whipplei*), matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*) are seen on Tin Mine trail along with deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*).

A popular trail for hikers in the [San Jacinto Mountains](#) near Idyllwild is the South Ridge Trail below Tahquitz Peak. The graded dirt road to the trailhead requires a 4WD. If you choose to walk the road instead (but adding about 4 miles round trip to your hike), look for slopes covered with volcanic gilia (*Gilia ochroleuca* ssp. *exilis*), purple flowered rock cress (*Arabis* sp.) and San Jacinto buckwheat (*Eriogonum apiculatum*) with its reddish orange flower bracts. An uncommon plant that is relatively abundant this year is the sweet little white-margin oxytheca (*Sidotheca emarginata*). Keeping it company is an outstanding little sunflower called alpine gold (*Hulsea vestita* ssp. *callicarpha*). Along the trail's switchbacks are patches of wild onion (*Allium* sp.), and if you skipped breakfast, your stomach will start talking to you here! At the trail's end is a fire lookout station where you can rest and ponder the expansive views before heading back to civilization.

Get out to the [Santa Monica Mountains](#) this weekend for a hike with family and friends. The trail behind the Train Depot at Paramount Ranch has an abundance of wildflowers and it is a short hike. As you proceed up the hill, the trail is lined with golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*) and elegant clarkia (*Clarkia unquiculata*) with a woolly blue curls (*Trichostema lanatum*) here and there. The combination of yellow and purple is quite appealing. Other notable plants include caterpillar phacelia (*Phacelia cicutaria*), elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), foothill penstemon (*Penstemon heterophyllus*), owl's clover (*Castilleja* sp.), slender sunflower (*Helianthus gracilentus*), purple nightshade (*Solanum* sp.), purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*), and golden stars (*Bloomeria crocea*). At nearby Malibu Creek State Park, you will find some nice blooms on the Cistern Trail. This trail is not signed, but look for "the no bikes" sign at the trailhead. There is a colony of matilija poppies (*Romneya coulteri*) near the head of the trail. Check these off your plant list as you walk by (but don't forget to stop and enjoy): California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), purple sage (*Salvia*

leucophylla), deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*), canyon sunflower (*Vegegasia capesioides*), sticky-leaf monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), woolly bluecurls (*Trichostema lanatum*), and Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp.). Continue west to the canyon bottom and take a right on the Cage Creek and Lookout Trails and there is some stunning speckled clarkia (*Clarkia cylindrica*). Further on the Lookout Trail, there is popcorn flower (*Plagiobothrys* sp. and *Cryptantha* sp.) and golden star (*Bloomeria crocea*). This is about a 2.5 mile loop trail. Further east at Topanga Canyon State Park, enter the Santa Ynez Canyon Trail off the Palidades road. The trailhead begins at the end of Vereda de la Montura St. which branches off of Palisades Dr. The creekside trail is always green and shady. But beware, some of that lush green foliage is poison oak! This canyon gets lots of summer flowers. At the trailhead you will find black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) in bloom along with canyon sunflower (*Vegegasia capesioides*) with good stands of hedge nettle (*Stachys bullata*). Walking on you see purple nightshade (*Solanum* sp.), sticky-leaf monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), wild rose (*Rosa* sp.), deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*), bush lupine (*Lupinus excubitus*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera* sp.) with lance-leaf dudleya (*Dudleya lanceolata*) and cream bush (*Holodiscus discolor*) just starting its bloom.

The native plant landscape at the Zoo/Griffith Park is very showy now—almost stealing the show from the animals. The matilija poppies (*Romneya coulteri*) in the Zoo parking lot is quite nice, as is the Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*), bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*). There are several California buckeye trees (*Aesculus californica*) along Zoo Drive and the toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) is also beginning to show its clusters of little white flowers. It will be in full flower in a few weeks, then you can anticipate the red berries around Christmas.

At [Descanso Gardens](#), the California native plant section is really very colorful with late spring perennials now in full glory. Penstemons (*Penstemon* spp.), Bush sunflower (*Encelia californica*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*). But the real show stoppers are the matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*) tall, with in-your-face white blossoms, and the many, many the different cacti, all in spectacular color for a brief time. One of most understated plants is the mock orange (*Philadelphus lewesii*) with its oh-so-fragrant white blossoms. There are some stunning tree anemone (*Carpenteria californica*) as well.

The plants at [Eaton Canyon Natural Area](#) are liking these sunnier days. As you step out of the car in the parking lot, pretty lavender-blue phacelias (*Phacelia* sp.) invite you to go on a hike up the canyon. The trails are lined with black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) and its fragrant cohort, white sage (*Salvia apiana*). Competing with the sages for the sunniest spotlight is golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*). The shady understory of trees is lit up with honeysuckle (*Lonicera* sp.) — its twining branches sporting bright white flowers like string lights on a Christmas tree. Other showy plants along the trails include yellow pincushion



Desert mariposa Lily (*Calochortus kennedyi*)
photo contribution from Laura Camp

(*Chaenactis glabriuscula*), clarkia (*Clarkia* sp.), sticky-leaf monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), and live forever (*Dudleya* sp.)

On the high desert side of the San Gabriel Mountains are two amazing parks, [Placerita Canyon Natural Area](#) and [Devil's Punchbowl Natural Area](#). Both have great flowering plants, excellent trails and spectacular views.

Just the right amount of "right" for a day trip with the family or hiking buddies. The flannel bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*) is in full yellow splendor

along with golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*); and the roads and trails are red with scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) and Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja* sp). There is much, much more in flower, so put the camera on the landscape setting and take it all in.

Driving east through the Mojave Desert you can choose to wind up in [Joshua Tree National Park](#) . The desert regions have been relatively cool which has prolonged flowering. The yellow spiny desert senna (*Senna armata*), prince's plume (*Stanleya pinnata*), and Parish's goldeneye (*Viguiera parishii*) are still in bloom around the south end of the park. Walk in the Stirrup Tank & White Tank area to find a pretty little monardella (*Monardella* sp.) hiding among the rocks. Bladderpod (*Isomeris arborea*) is putting on a little display, and follow your nose to the strong scent of San Felipe Dyssodia (*Adenophyllum porophylloides*) with its golden orange blossoms. Paper bag bush (*Salazaria mexicana*), named for its inflated pink flower calyxes is in bloom everywhere. It's like walking among masses of little pink party balloons. Explore Queens Valley and Skull Rock because wherever there is a little gathering of rocks there are plenty of flowers tucked in their sheltered fortresses. The succulent Panamint dudleya (*Dudleya saxosa*) is stunning, as well as the bright blossoms of the hedgehog (*Echinocereus engelmannii*) and Mojave mound cacti (*Echinocereus triglochidiatus*). At a pullout east of Hemingway in Hidden Valley, you'll find several stunning orange-red desert mariposa lily (*Calochortus kennedyi*) using nearby shrubs as plant supports. Patches desert calico (*Loeseliastrum matthewesii*) with their elaborately patterned flowers, fill in sandy areas and Parry's beargrass (*Nolina parryi*) stands tall above the landscape.

Further north, take a detour from Hwy 395 at Bishop to travel US Hwy 6 northeast to the [Volcanic Tablelands](#). Here, you will find extensive patches of scale bud (*Anisocoma acaulis*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), venus

blazing star (*Mentzelia nitens*), desert calico (*Loeseliastrum matthewsii*), desert pincushion (*Chaenactis* sp.), white tidy tips (*Layia glandulosa*), and desert five spot (*Eremalche rotundifolia*), along with indigo bush (*Psoralea argophylla*), apricot globe mallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*), and lupines (*Lupinus* spp.). There is much more here to see. The color and diversity of plants in this area are spectacular. Have a safe and fun road trip!

Traveling across the southern Sierra Nevada you can explore [Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks](#). Heading east along Highway 198 through Three Rivers into the national parks, look around to see the showy California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), and flannel bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*) filling the landscape with color. The real show-stopper though is the flowering dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*) you see upon entering the Giant Forest. Flowering dogwoods together with giant sequoias. Only in California folks; no where else in the world will you see this magical splendor!

With a few sunny days in late May, [Yosemite National Park](#)'s spring flowering is heating up. The Merced River Canyon remains alive with whites, yellows, and pinks—especially the purplish-pink of farewell-to-spring (*Clarkia dudleyana*) growing in masses on the canyon's grassy slopes. Traveling from Mariposa to El Portal along Highway 140 provides a good number of the early summer flowers, including flowering shrubs. Yerba santa shrub (*Eriodictyon californicum*), with its leathery leaves, begins to display its lavender flowers. The evergreen shrub chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) displays small white flowers, against its resinous foliage, on dry slopes and rocky soils in the oak-woodland zone. Also, the California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) has started to display its showy flower spikes. Still noticeable along the roadside is the bright yellow common madia (*Madia elegans*)—which flowers in the spring and again in the summer. New along Highway 140 is purple milkweed (*Asclepias cordifolia*), an important host plant for caterpillars. Its smooth purplish leaves that give the entire plant a purplish hue. Other flora along this route are mountain jewelflower (*Streptanthus tortuosus*), Chinese house (*Collinsia heterophylla*), blazing star (*Mentzelia crocea*), twining brodiaea (*Dichelostemma volubile*), and Western wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum*). Look also for the yellow heads of golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*) and orangey-red splash of Applegate's paintbrush (*Castilleja applegatei*). The fleshy leaves of brightly colored stonecrop rise out of steep rock crevices often dark with dew. Sierra stonecrop (*Sedum obtusatum*) is the most common stonecrop in Yosemite—its thick green leaves form a rosette base with erect reddish stems that are topped by perfect yellow flowers. Also in the stonecrop family is the related liveforever (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *cymosa*) with its fleshy-leaved rosettes, red stems and flowers from bright yellow to orange or red. Although cold weather delayed the Yosemite Valley flower show, it has started with a white theme between the mountain dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*) and buck brush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*) blossoms, distinguished by its elongated flower panicles and opposite leaves. Also, during the start of the flower season in the Valley, hints of red at ground level might catch a wildflower observer's eye.

An intense red, the snow plant (*Sarcodes sanguinea*) is a parasitic plant feeding on soil fungi. Almost 30 monkeyflower species can be found in Yosemite. Park staff have found a couple “special status” species— yellow-lip pansy monkeyflower (*Mimulus pulchellus*) and the slender-stemmed monkeyflower (*Mimulus filicaulis*). When you see a monkeyflower, lightly touch the tip of its stigma and notice its two lips slowly close. This traps any pollen brought to the flower by an insect and prevents self-pollination as the pollinator leaves the flower. As early summer approaches, visit the Big Meadow area in Foresta for the most blooms. There, you’ll typically see star-tulip (*Calochortus* sp.), which are white lilies that sit low to the ground, as well as common madia (*Madia elegans*), purple mouse-ears (*Mimulus douglassii*), and fan violet (*Viola* sp.). Access the Big Meadow area from Foresta Road near the El Portal park administrative complex—but plan to walk because this gravel road is not suggested for driving. Or, access the other end of Foresta Road and the Old Coulterville Road from the community of Foresta, which is off the Big Oak Flat Road (Highway 120) inside the park.



Flowering *Clarkia* and *Dudleya* at Yosemite contributed by Elizabeth Munding

Across the Great Central Valley, wildflower viewing in the Coast Ranges at [Pinnacles National Monument](#) is magnificent this season! Venus thistle (*Cirsium occidentale*), golden yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*), California butterweed (*Senecio californica*), mule ears (*Wyethia helenoides*), jewel flower (*Streptanthus glandulosa*) and Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja affinis* ssp. *affinis*) are in stunning color. Many lupines (*Lupinus* spp.), larkspurs (*Delphinium* spp.) and clarkias (*Clarkia* spp.) are adding a range of pinks, blues and purples to the landscape canvas. The colorful poppy family —bush poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*), tufted poppy (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), wind poppy (*Stylomecon heterophylla*), San Benito poppy (*Eschscholzia hypocoides*) and cream cups (*Platystemon californica*) add warm color confetti to the landscape. The bulb plants—pretty faces (*Triteleia lugens*), and butterfly mariposa (*Calochortus venustus*) are poking up to show off. Don’t always keep your eyes to the ground posy peeping. Look up now and then and enjoy the impressive geology and condors (maybe) too!



Coming back south to the LA Basin, stop at [Santa Barbara Botanic Garden](#) for displays that are at their peak and offer a rare glimpse of California’s diverse flora. Impressive displays of clarkias (*Clarkia amoena*, *Clarkia bottae*, and *Clarkia unguiculata*) dominate the slopes along the Porter Trail, highlighted by brightly colored patches of golden

yarrow (*Eriophyllum confertiflorum*) and Cedros Island verbena (*Verbena lilacina*), a Baja California endemic. Scattered throughout are several species of penstemon (*Penstemon* spp.), including brightly colored pink and forms of showy penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*). The Meadow Section, features a diversity of sedges and grasses, punctuated by magnificent displays of Matilija poppy (*Romneya coulteri*), foothill penstemon (*Penstemon heterophyllus*), California's unique version of purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*), and accented by scattered spires of hairy evening primrose (*Oenothera elata* ssp. *hookeri*). A colorful display of iconic California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) is in full flower. The Redwood Section and Mission Canyon Dam offer shade and cool temperatures, plus carpets of redwood sorrel (*Oxalis oregana*), wild ginger (*Asarum caudatum*), and giant chain fern (*Woodwardia fimbriata*). Massive displays of the fire-following canyon sunflower (*Venegasia carpesioides*) continue to flower throughout the Canyon Section, and the first orange-flowered Humboldt lilies (*Lilium humboldtii*) have appeared, some with stalks exceeding 6 feet. The last few weeks of May will offer a superb opportunity to follow the transition from California's spring to summer, and experience first-hand the Garden's diverse collections.

California's wildflowers are a precious legacy. To ensure that flowers return each year, remember to **stay on designated trails** and please **don't disturb the fragile and beautiful flowers!**

Your monetary support enables us to provide the Wildflower Hotline and continue the Foundation's ongoing mission to protect California's natural habitats and educate the public about gardening with native plants. Donations are tax-deductible and can be made through our website, by mail, or by visiting the Foundation in Sun Valley.

Until next year - drive safely and enjoy the botanical wonders of California.

NATIVE PLANT & WILDFLOWER EVENTS:

[Idyllwild Nature Center](#)

Memorial Weekend: Annual Wildflower and Art Exhibit on Saturday, May 28 – Monday, May 30 from 10:00am – 4:30pm.

Guest Speaker Dr. Mike Hamilton leads a stroll in the forest as he interprets nature through discovery, observation and investigation. Wildflower Show, Music, native plant sale, crafts for children and local artists exhibit.

[Antelope Valley California Poppy Preserve](#)

Jane S. Pinheiro Interpretive Center is now open from 10am - 4pm weekdays and 9am – 5pm weekends for the duration of the wildflower season. Free guided tours will be offered daily beginning March 12: 11 am on weekdays; 10 am and 2 pm on weekends.

[Descanso Gardens](#)

Docent Tours of the Gardens Saturdays, April-May | 1:30 p.m. | Center Circle. Take a guided tour of Descanso Gardens on Saturdays in April and May. Descanso's knowledgeable docents lead these hour-plus walking tours. *Free with Gardens admission.*

[Pine Hill Preserve](#)

The Bureau of Land Management's Mother Lode Field Office has scheduled springtime guided field trips to view wildflowers and other features at the Pine Hill Preserve in western El Dorado County.

Guided field trips will be held on:

Saturday, June 4—Kanaka Valley/Salmon Falls unit

Participants will be notified of the designated meeting location one week before the scheduled tour. For more information or to sign up for a tour, contact Graciela Hinshaw, preserve manager, at (916) 941-3134 (ghinshaw@blm.gov) or Wynia at (916) 941-3135 (JWynia@blm.gov).

The **Yosemite Conservancy**, which is the park's non-profit partner, offers a variety of "Yosemite Outdoor Adventures" to view wildflowers. Plan to attend one of these field trips by contacting **Yosemite Conservancy by phone at 209/379-2646: or e-mail at adventures@yosemiteconservancy.org** .

July 8-10 **White Wolf Botany:** Three great days with naturalist Michael Ross, exploring the rich floral diversity of Harden's Gardens, sphagnum bogs, granitic uplands. and the snow forest.

July 22-24 **Sierra Natural History:** David Lukas wrote the book on this subject and shares the flora and fauna of the Tuolumne Meadows area with curious naturalists with all levels of experience.

July 30 **Tuolumne Flowers:** A one-day exploration of the subalpine region for the casual botanist with naturalist Michael Ross.

Yosemite Conservancy Online: <http://www.yosemiteconservancy.org/experience-yosemite/outdoor-adventures>

California Native Plant Society Chapters

[CNPS-Los Angeles/Santa Monica Chapter](#)

Field trips:

SUN 5/29 10:00 am Malibu Bluffs Park (2 hrs)

Springtime Meander on the Bluff. Discover native wildflowers and great views. (818) 782-9346.

SAT 6/18 8:30 am Caballero Canyon, Lower Trailhead (3 hrs)

Chaparral Chatter Wildflower Hike. Enjoy the continuing emergence of new flowers. Seasonal changes in the chaparral and oak woodland are astonishing and views outstanding. Bring water, hat and a curious open mind to take in the splendor of his gem trail Leisurely pace but steep hiking on narrow trail in one section.

Call for directions 818-782-9346 or 818 881-3706.

SUN 6/26 10:00 am Malibu Bluffs Park (2 hrs)

Meander on the Bluffs. Cool off during this early summer walk. 310-472-0624

[CNPS-Orange County Chapter](#)

Field Trips:

May 28—San Onofre State Park, to search for *Ferrocactus viridescens*—San Diego Barrel Cactus. Binoculars highly recommended. This is the last scheduled SAMBY trip Santa Ana Mountain Big ear, that is. Bob Allen leads. For details and possible other SAMBY trips that are scheduled on short notice, go to our website or samby4ocnps@me.com.

[CNPS-San Gabriel Mountains Chapter](#)

Field Trips:

Sunday, June 12, 2011, 09:00 am (2 hrs)

Eaton Canyon Plant Walk: Meet in front of **Eaton Canyon Nature Center** at 9:00 am. Then go on a leisurely walk, about 2 hours, through the native plant garden that surrounds the Center and into the nearby wild areas.

Saturday, June 4, 2011, 10:00 am

Highway 2 and Santa Clara Divide Road: Meet at Chilao Visitor Center. We will choose the best route to take from there, driving along Angeles Crest Highway and side roads looking for wildflowers. We will document some of the rare plants found there, such as *Hulsea vestita*, *Swertia neglecta*, and *Castilleja gleasonii*, our chapter logo. Picnic at Upper Chilao Picnic Area. **Adventure Pass** needed. Full tank of gas necessary. Leaders Cliff and Gabi McLean, and Jane Strong.

Saturday, June 18, 2011, 10:00 am

Highway 39 above Crystal Lake from yellow gate: Meet at the yellow fire gate at the closure of Highway 39 after passing the Crystal Lake turnoff. We will walk along the closed section of the road looking at the delightful and colorful hanging gardens on the cliffs and the views over Bear Canyon. Picnic at Crystal Lake near the concession. **Adventure Pass** needed. Full tank of gas necessary.
Leader Jane Strong.