

Discover Spring Wildflowers in California State Parks

Spring is a great time to see what's blooming in California State Parks. (It's always a good idea to call ahead, because conditions can change due to weather.)

Here's a sample of what visitors can find.

For information about wildflowers in bloom at **Anza-Borrego Desert State Park**, east of San Diego via Highways 78 and 79 in IMPERIAL, SAN DIEGO and RIVERSIDE COUNTIES, call (760) 767-4684 or on-line at: <http://www.anzaborrego.statepark.org/wildflowers.html>

Andrew Molera State Park, 21 miles south of Carmel on Highway 1 in MONTEREY COUNTY, features a variety of springtime flowers. The park phone number is (831) 667-2315

Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve, 15 miles west of Lancaster in LOS ANGELES COUNTY, generally features its greatest blooming period in April, depending on rain. For more information, call the park at (661) 942-0662. You can find information and photos about the park online: www.parks.ca.gov

Azalea State Reserve, five miles north of Arcata in HUMBOLDT COUNTY, preserves outstanding examples of azaleas that generally bloom in April and May. The reserve has a parking lot and trails. For more information call the sector office at (707) 488-2041.

Rancho Del Oso in **Big Basin Redwoods State Park** (in SANTA CRUZ and SAN MATEO COUNTIES) will feature a * **Wildflower Weekend** on Saturday and Sunday, April 24 and 25 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be wildflower hikes, displays, classes, garden tours and special activities for kids. Headquarters for the event will be the Rancho del Oso Nature and History Center on the coastal side of the park. Directions: from Santa Cruz drive north on Highway One, 17 miles just before the Waddell Creek Bridge turn right at the Rancho Del Oso Nature and History Center. From Half moon Bay take Highway One south 30 miles after you cross the Waddell Creek Bridge turn left at the Rancho Del Oso Nature and History Center.

For more information, call (831) 427-2288.

Garrapata State Park, 6.7 miles south of Rio Road in Carmel in MONTEREY COUNTY, features the Soberanes canyon/ridge trail that winds through meadows, a riparian zone, a lovely redwood grove and an exposed coastal ridge. On certain sections of this trail visitors may feel that they're swimming through flowers, which can include Shooting Stars, Johnny Jump Ups, Blue Dicks, Golden Buttercup, Elegant Clarkia, Goldfields, Douglas Iris, Checkerbloom, Star Zygadine, Fuchsia-flowered Gooseberry, Trillium, Tidy Tips, Footsteps of Spring and a fantastic variety of Bush Lupine. Visitors can also encounter the more common Monkey Flower, Seaside Painted Cups, Coyote Brush, Lizard Tail Yarrow, Mock Heather and Poppies.

Visitors are advised that this is not a particularly easy hike. The first couple of miles are relatively flat and easy but the ridge can only be reached by a steep climb. For more information, the park phone number is (831) 624-4909.

Humboldt Redwoods State Park 20 miles north of Garberville, generally provides excellent displays of wildflowers along the Avenue of the Giants. Visitors will find Humboldt Lilies and orchids in late March to April and Dogwood in April into early May, depending on the warmth of the spring. For more information call the park visitor center at (707) 946-2263.

Calaveras Big Trees State Park, four miles north east of Arnold on Highway 4 in CALAVERAS/TUOLUMNE COUNTIES, is known for its wildflowers in June, especially along the Lava Bluffs Trail. The park phone number is (209) 795-2334.

Carmel River State Beach can be reached from Highway 1 in Carmel via Ocean Avenue and Scenic Road in MONTEREY COUNTY. Wildflowers can be found along the bluff trail. The park phone number is (831) 624-4909.

Castle Crags State Park, six miles south of Dunsmuir on I-5 in SHASTA and SISKIYOU COUNTIES, has a variety of wildflowers in the spring. The park phone number is (530) 235-2684.

Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park, seven miles south of Crescent City on U.S. Highway 101 in DEL NOTRE COUNTY, has magnificent displays of rhododendrons that can be seen from the highway as well as numerous roadside turnouts in April and May, depending on the warmth of the spring. For more information call the Redwood National and State Park information center at (707) 464-6101, extension 5064.

Henry W. Coe State Park, in the mountains south and east of San Jose in SANTA CLARA and STANISLAUS COUNTIES, is a wonderful place to see spring wildflowers. Early in the year visitors may see white milkmaids, blue hounds tongue, or yellow buttercups. As spring progresses, the flowers become more numerous with goldfields, owls clover, butter and eggs, columbine, delphinium, and may more. Visitors might even get lucky and see the charming tiny purple mouse ears. Short wildflower walks - less than two miles and less than two hours - are given every Sunday at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. from the middle of March through the Memorial Day

Weekend. For more information see the park website at www.coepark.org The park phone number is (408) 779-2728.

Humboldt Redwoods State Park, 20 miles north of Garberville in HUMBOLDT COUNTY, generally provides excellent displays of wildflowers along the Avenue of the Giants. Visitors will find Humboldt Lilies and orchids in late March to April and Dogwood in April into early May, depending on the warmth of the spring. For more information call the park visitor center at (707) 946-2263.

McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park, 11 miles northeast of Burney on Highway 89 in SHASTA COUNTY, features a variety of wildflowers in the spring. The park phone number is (530) 335-2777.

Millerton Lake State Recreation Area, 20 miles northeast of Fresno in FRESNO and MADERA COUNTIES, features spring flowers on the Blue Oak Trail, an easy walk. Visitors taking a more strenuous hike on the Buzzards Roost Trail can also find spring flowers. The park phone number is (559) 822-2332.

Montaña de Oro State Park, seven miles south of Los Osos on Pecho Valley Road in SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, can feature hills covered with poppies, lupines, sticky monkey flowers, wild radish and mustard. Best time to visit is April and May. For more information call (805) 528-0513 Thursday through Sunday, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Mount Tamalpais State Park, North of San Francisco's Golden Gate in MARIN COUNTY, features spectacular and easily-accessed wildflowers each spring. Visitors can get to the park from Highway 101 take Highway 1 to the Stinson Beach exit and follow signs up the mountain. The park phone number is (415) 388-2070.

Olompali State Historic Park, three miles north of Novato on U.S. 101 in MARIN COUNTY, also features spectacular and easily-accessed wildflowers each spring. The park entrance is accessible only to southbound traffic from Highway 101. The park phone number is (415) 892-3383

Pacheco State Park is a good place to visit in April for wildflowers. The park is on Highway 152, located 20 miles east of Gilroy in MERCED COUNTY. * On Saturday, April 17, the park will celebrate its first * **Wildflower Day** from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. There will be self-guided as well as guide-led nature hikes throughout the park and all visitors will receive a free Pacheco Wildflower button. Visitors are advised to bring their own water, picnic lunch, sunscreen, and wear sturdy shoes. The park phone number is (209) 826-1196.

Point Lobos State Park, three miles south of Carmel on Highway 1, features a fairly easy hike with nice coastal bluff flowers. The park phone number is (831) 624-4909.

Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park is 50 miles north of Eureka and 25 miles south of Crescent City on Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway off of Highway 101 in HUMBOLDT AND DEL NORTE COUNTIES. Careful observers in the park will find beautiful but illusive orchids among the ancient redwood groves as well as more prominent displays of rhododendrons along the parkway in late March through May. For more information call the park visitor center at (707) 464-6101 extension 5300.

Salinas River State Beach, 16 miles north of Monterey and one miles south of Moss Landing in MONTEREY COUNTY, has a nice section of wildflowers along the boardwalk at Molera Road. The park phone number is (831) 384-7695.

San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area, 12 miles west of Los Banos on Highway 152 in MERCED COUNTY, features spring wildflowers throughout the park. The park phone number is (209) 826-1196.

Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area, six miles east of Corning and I-5 on South Avenue in TEHAMA COUNTY, has a variety of spring wildflowers. The park phone number is (530) 839-2112.

Zmudowski State Beach, one mile north of Moss Landing in MONTEREY COUNTY, features wildflowers in late spring, although many of them are non-natives. The park phone number is (831) 384-7695.

Visit California State Parks on-line at www.parks.ca.gov

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