

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Wildflower Update

April 7, 2017

The displays of annual wildflowers that earned the moniker "Superbloom" are past their peak, but many flowers are still to be found in Anza-Borrego.

Ocotillos are still blooming, and they are beautiful! Good places to look for them are: Highway S-22 toward the Salton Sea, Borrego Springs Road south of Tilting T, the junction of Borrego Springs Road and Highway 78, Yaqui Pass Road (also great for fragrant desert senna), and Ocotillo Flats, near Desert Gardens in Coyote Canyon.

Rocky hillsides are aglow with the yellow flowers of brittlebush, making for a beautiful drive to the west up either Montezuma Grade (Highway S-22) or up and over Yaqui Pass Road (Highway S-3). Ocotillos and cacti can be found among the rocks, also.

The Bill Kenyon Overlook Trail (at the top of Yaqui Pass) has brittlebush and other perennials in bloom, and a lovely overlook, which can be reached by hiking one mile from the Yaqui Pass Primitive Camp (a shorter trail leaves from a pullout on Hwy S-3).

The Mine Wash Village site has plenty of shrubs in bloom, as well as cacti and a few annuals. 4WD vehicles can continue up the road for more flowers.

Hikers should be able to find shrubs in bloom, along with cacti and perhaps some annuals, in canyons such as Palm Canyon, Hellhole Canyon, and especially Plum Canyon (off Highway 78; 2WD vehicles should stay right at the fork).

The Visitor Center remains one of the best places to see many varieties of cacti in bloom, as well as shrubs (indigo bush!) and ocotillo.

A fine patch of lupine continues to bloom across the highway from Arroyo Salado.

Most of the sunflowers in the fields along on Henderson Canyon Road have gone to seed, but a walk out into the fields (toward the mountains) might yield a few patches of fresher, still-blooming sunflowers.

A few patches of sand verbena may still linger among the desert dandelions and pincushion blooming around the collection of metal sculptures near the junction of Borrego Springs Road (north) and Henderson Canyon Road (east).

Primitive camps available to two-wheel-drive vehicles are Culp Valley (west of town) and Arroyo Salado (east of town), both on Highway S-22, and Blair Valley and Mountain Palm Springs on S-2. 4WD vehicles can access Yaqui Well camp, Fish Creek, and Bow Willow (\$15 fee). No ground fires permitted.

Visitors who have a day or more would do well to explore the southern half of the park, also. Flowers should be coming into bloom at higher elevations, and the primitive camps at Blair Valley and Mountain Palm Springs should be less crowded. Fill your gas tank before heading south, take plenty of water, and be prepared to pack out your trash. No ground fires. Be sure to drink plenty of water while you are here!

Dogs must remain leashed while in the park, and are not allowed on hiking trails.