

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Wildflower Update  
March 7, 2017

**If at all possible, try to plan your visit for a weekday morning, as parking areas on Saturdays and Sundays fill by mid-morning!**

As expected, plentiful rains in December, January AND February have encouraged the development of a spectacular showing of annual plants in the flower fields north of town, along trails in western canyons, and even in the badlands.

Desert lily plants are continuing to bloom in many locations, including the badlands. The dirt road to **Arroyo Salado Primitive Camp** is a good place to look for lilies (beyond the camp area, 4WD is recommended). Notch-leaved phacelia is another treasure to be found in the badlands this year, but only if you are driving a four-wheel-drive vehicle.

Every day, we are seeing more and more Desert Sunflowers start blooming in the “Flower Fields” along **Henderson Canyon Road**. Increasing temperatures in the coming week will mean the peak is most likely just around the corner.

Spectacle-pod has been blooming in fragrant profusion at the north end of Di Giorgio Road, and is being joined by masses of pink sand verbena and exceptional specimens of dune evening primrose and desert lily. The **Coyote Canyon** Road has been graded again, making it passable to two-wheel-drive vehicles as far as Desert Gardens (**caution:** shoulders are sandy, leaving just a few areas safe for passing and turning around). Bright yellow Parish’s poppies covering the hillsides are delightful! Drivers who don’t want to drive the dirt road should park at the end of the pavement and venture out onto the flats, for desert lilies in bloom, dune evening primrose, lupine, desert chicory, and patches of sand verbena, as well as an increasing number of desert sunflowers.

Poppies, phacelia, cryptantha, chuparosa and brittlebush have been blooming at the **Visitor Center**, where desert dandelions and other annuals are starting to make an impressive showing.

**Borrego Palm Canyon** is beautiful right now, with Canterbury Bells, Poppies, Monkeyflower, and Phacelia blooming against lots of bright green foliage! Brittlebushes are loaded with buds, and should be bursting with bright yellow flowers any day. Look closely for delicate Whispering Bells and diminutive Little Gold Poppy. **Hellhole Canyon** should have similar flowers, and while it is a longer hike, could be an option when the parking lot for Borrego Palm Canyon is full.

Visitors to the southern end of the park would do well to spend some time at **the Carrizo Badlands Overlook**, where lupine, spectacle-pod, and brown-eyed evening primrose can be found near the parking area, and desert lilies on the hillside should be blooming by now. Residents of the Canebrake area report that roadsides in the south should be becoming into bloom soon.

It’s hard to predict a peak, but rapid development of blooms points to the middle of the month as an excellent time to visit. If temperatures continue to be mild, flowers should persist into the latter half of March, at least, and perhaps later as well.

For updates, join Anza-Borrego Foundation’s email list at [www.theabf.org](http://www.theabf.org) or call the State Park Wildflower Hotline, 760-767-4684.