

## Los Padres National Forest



*Seep Spring Monkey Flowers*

### **Figueroa Mountain Wildflower Update – May 9<sup>th</sup> Update of the 2012 Season**

Greetings! Welcome to the May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012 update. While California poppies and lupine are beginning to decline, the late bloomers are in full force. Figueroa Mountain is proudly exhibiting a beautiful variety of these late season delights. The lower elevation has little to see, but as you climb up the mountain, more and more beautiful blooms become visible.

Starting at the first cattle guard, the wildflowers are far and few between. Mexican elderberry and hummingbird sage are still in bloom along with a few pearly everlastings, golden yarrow and the beginning of beautiful clarkia. A few Chinese houses, buttercups, fiesta flowers and blue dicks are still in bloom, but quickly disappearing in this elevation. Around the second bend, the rock formation on the right, is still displaying some lovely, Red Indian paintbrush. As one continues under the tree canopy, find hummingbird sage and clarkia, as it struggles to be seen through the tall grass.

Continuing up the hill will bring you to a flowering Jimson weed right along the road and as you get to the opened, rusty cattle guard, look on the ground to the right and find tiny cream cups that are still in bloom, along with some fillaree.

Other wildflowers to look for as you continue your uphill climb include a few buttercups, goldfields, coreopsis, California poppies, fillaree, royal lupine, buckwheat, blue dicks, Dudleyas, and golden yarrow. Lovely orange wall flowers are still waiting eagerly for that dance, just as one passes the serpentine wall on the right. Beautiful mariposa lilies are blooming in the grassy meadows along with butter lupine. As one continues up the hill in the shaded area, stunning yellow seep spring monkey flowers (see above picture) are busy blooming in the moisture of the underground spring, along the hillside.

At Vista Point (large gravel turnout about 11.4 miles from the bottom), aside of a few blue dicks and hidden blue-eyed grass, not much is there to view. Across from Vista Point, look for golden yarrow, blue dicks, blue-eyed grass, chias, California poppies, clarkia and black sage.

In the field to the right, before Tunnell Ranch Road, more wall flowers can be seen, along with golden yarrow and the beginning of wild onions.

About a quarter mile further, the popular poppy hillsides and slopes are still in bloom with tuft poppies and lupine but quickly going to seed. Among them, caterpillar phacelias are rapidly taking over. Regardless, this area is still breathtaking and well worth a trip. The bush lupine continues to bloom.

Continuing on Figueroa Mountain Road, between the campground and the Davy Brown trailhead, one can find bush lupine, a few sky lupine, golden yarrow, a plethora of chia, fiddleneck, mustard, clarkia and Mexican elderberry. Between the Davy Brown Trailhead and Ranger Peak, look for bush lupine, sky lupine, goldfields, tidy tips, golden yarrow, poppies, Indian paintbrush, blue-eyed grass a few buttercups, a fuchsia flowering gooseberry, clarkia, a few blue dicks, red clover, mustard and fiddleneck.

Approximately half way up Ranger Peak, in the shaded area on the right, sweet baby blue eyes are looking at you through the miner's lettuce. Also, fiddleneck, bush lupine, sky lupine and purple phacelias are present.

From Ranger Peak to Cachuma Saddle, the sticky leaf monkey flowers have made a tremendous come back from their pre-season, January bloom. In combination with their beautiful pale orange blooms, bright yellow bush poppies and magnificent purple bush lupine, makes this corridor simple spectacular. Along with these beauties, pearly everlasting, California poppies, scarlet buglers, gold yarrow, caterpillar phacelias, purple phacelias, Mexican elderberry, chia, black sage, milk thistle, wallflowers, Chinese houses, popcorn, Indian paintbrush and purple nightshade can all be found along this stretch. An assortment of clarkia are also beginning to make their flashy appearance.

Sunset Valley is also filled with colorful treasures. Look for golden yarrow, scarlet buglers, Nuttles larkspur, chia, sky lupine, poppies, caterpillar phacelias, blue dicks, purple nightshade, purple phacelias, popcorn flower, mustard, Mexican elderberry, milk thistle, chias, Coulter's lupine, Chinese houses, wine cup clarkia, elegant clarkia, striped clarkia, regular (solid pink), morning glories, coreopsis, sticky leaf monkey flowers and bush poppies. Seep spring monkey flowers can also be seen along the creek.

Happy Canyon is equally as remarkable with its pallet of vibrant colors. Golden yarrow, vetch, Coulter's lupine, mustard, Italian thistle, sticky leaf monkey flower, morning glories, Nuttles larkspur, black sage, bush poppies, spiny lupine (although they are going to seed), pearly everlasting, a few buttercups, clarkia, wild roses and Mexican elderberry are all in bloom. As one makes their way to what used to be Cachuma Campground, look for beautiful, dark purple fiesta flowers, golden yarrow and Chinese houses, located on the right side of the road in the shaded areas. As you go beyond the opened gate, Mexican elderberry, sticky leaf monkey flower, Dudleyas and beautiful Indian paintbrush adorns the rocky walls to the right. As you make your final descent down Happy Canyon, one can spot delicate mariposa lilies, milk thistle, coreopsis, mustard, black sage, butter lupine, cactus flowers, Dudleyas, blue-eyed grass, deer weed, Nuttles larkspur, elegant clarkia, spotted clarkia, regular pink clarkia, wine cup clarkia, Mexican elderberry, popcorn flower, fiesta flowers, Chinese houses, fairy's lanterns, death camas, purple nightshade, morning glories, sticky leaf monkey flowers, blue dicks and a few lingering, buttercups and prickly phlox.

That's all for this update. Look for our next wildflower update in two weeks. Until then, happy viewing! For more information, please contact Helen Tarbet at 805-925-9538, ext. 246, or by e-mail at [htarbet@fs.fed.us](mailto:htarbet@fs.fed.us).



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