

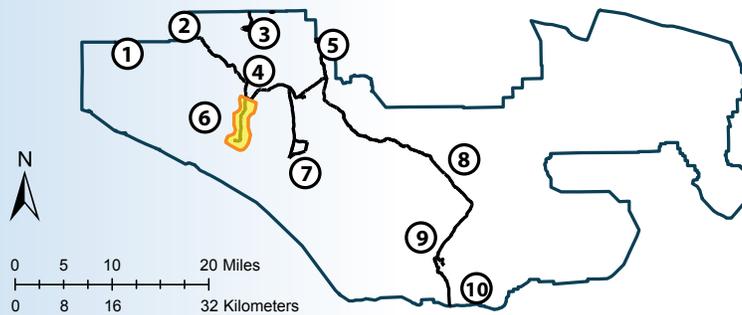
Joshua Tree

Wildflower Report

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



April 21, 2016



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Where are the wildflowers blooming?

This report offers weekly highlights on wildflower conditions for seven general regions within Joshua Tree National Park. For each region, we list the most charismatic blooms with pictures to aid in identification. Blooms listed for one region may be present in other regions as well—particularly the annual flowers.

This week in the park

Lost Horse Valley is filled with a riot of blooms. Take Keys View Road south and enjoy the gold and purple colors of annual flowers covering the ground, and keep an eye out for apricot globemallow—parts of the valley are covered in its orange flowers.



Golden linanthus (*Leptosiphon aureus*), purple mat (*Nama demissa*), desert dandelion (*Malacothrix glabrata*), and common phacelia (*Phacelia distans*) cover the ground of Lost Horse Valley.

1 Black Rock Area

Spring annuals and perennial shrubs have joined the show of the Joshua trees at Black Rock.



Notch-leaf phacelia
(*Phacelia crenulata*)
This plant has reddish stalks, deeply divided green leaves, and a curl of lilac-blue flowers. It is usually about one foot tall.



Mojave suncup
(*Camissonia campestris*)
These butter-yellow flowers can be identified by their button-like pistil.



Narrowleaf goldenbush
(*Ericameria linearifolia*)
The bright gold blooms of this perennial shrub have started in Black Rock!



Parish's larkspur
(*Delphinium parishii*)
Parish's larkspur has a tall inflorescence of beautiful purple flowers with spurs that contain nectar-producing petals.



Redstem filaree
(*Erodium cicutarium*)
This annual flower is a non-native species, and has spread across much of California.



Scale-bud
(*Anisocoma acaulis*)
This flower can be differentiated from desert dandelion and chicory by its smooth, scale-like phyllaries (bracts below the flowering head).

3 Indian Cove

Annual plants and perennial shrubs are still in scattered bloom at Indian Cove.



Parish's poppy
(*Eschscholzia parishii*)
This poppy is larger than the little gold poppy, and lacks the dark central pigmentation of the Joshua Tree poppy.



Desert calico
(*Loeseliastrum matthewsii*)
Desert calico's spotted flowers and spiky vegetation can be spotted on the ground near Rattlesnake Canyon.



Beavertail cactus
(*Opuntia basilaris*)
These bright fuchsia flowers jump out against the muted tones of the desert.



Apricot mallow
(*Sphaeralcea ambigua*)
Mallows are blooming across the park. Take caution with their foliage—it can irritate the skin.

4 Wonderland of Rocks



Mojave aster
(*Xylorhiza tortifolia*)
This lilac to purple daisy can be found most easily on banks and sheltered slopes. It is a favorite of bees.



Shrubby deervetch
(*Acemisson rigidus*)
These golden flowers are not missing petals— they are bilaterally symmetric. The lower petals form a keel which opens under the weight of pollinators, exposing the pistil.



Woolly desert marigold
(*Baileya pleniradiata*)
This golden flower can be distinguished from the encelias by its densely woolly foliage and narrower, lobed leaves.



Mojave mound cactus
(*Echinocereus mojavenis*)
Bright red flowers are often bird-pollinated, as is the case for this cactus. It is the only hummingbird-pollinated cactus in the region.



Desert Mariposa Lily
(*Calochortus kennedyi*)
The deep and vibrant red-orange of the desert mariposa lily is a treat: these bulbs only flower when rainfall is perfect.



Desert liveforever
(*Dudleya saxosa*)
The only true succulent found commonly in the park. This plant can sprout from fine gravel or cracks between rocks alike.



Scarlet milkvetch
(*Astragalus coccineus*)
It may resemble chuparosa, but this plant is an annual, and in a different family. The bright red flowers attract birds for pollination.



Fremont's phacelia
(*Phacelia fremontii*)
This phacelia is notable for the yellow centers of its flowers, which can be quite distinctive.

6 Keys View Area/ Lost Horse Mine



The Lost Horse Valley is experiencing a spectacular bloom. Annuals and perennials alike are blossoming, and carpets of pincushion (*Chaenactis spp.*) cover the ground between the Joshua trees.



Golden linanthus
(*Leptosiphon aureus*)
The delicate, spike-like leaves of the golden linanthus distinguish it from the yellow shooting star, whose flowers at first look similar.



Wallace's woolly daisy
(*Eriophyllum wallacei*)
This small daisy often sprouts from sandy or gravelly areas, forming a domed tuft on the ground.



Desert woollystar
(*Eriastrum eremicum*)
These flowers tend to show up near the tail end of a bloom. If the woollystar is flowering, the bloom in that area will likely begin to fade in the next few weeks.



Parish's larkspur
(*Delphinium parishii*)
Parish's larkspur can be found in this area, but a discerning eye is needed: it can easily blend into the bushes of common phacelia.



Longspine cottonthorn
(*Tetradymia axillaris*)
You may catch a whiff of a musky, tangy mint scent in this area. Follow your nose to this bush, but beware of the spines.



Fremont's phacelia
(*Phacelia fremontii*)
Fremont's phacelia has also sprung up in the Lost Horse Mine area.

8 Pinto Basin

Creosotebush (*Larrea tridentata*) is in vivid bloom in the Pinto Basin. Also in bloom are bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea*), desert senna (*Senna armata*), and ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*).



Bladderpod
(NPS/Hannawacker)



Desert senna
(NPS/Ingersoll)



Creosotebush
(NPS/Ingersoll)



9 10 Cottonwood Spring and Bajada

Perennial Shrubs and Cacti



Brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*)

The leaves of this shrub are fair in color and feel fuzzy due to protective hairs on their surface. Before it flowers, brittlebush can have a domed appearance.



Chuparosa

(*Justicia californica*)

This shrub's tube-shaped red flowers are adapted for pollination by birds. It is much shorter and more densely branched than the ocotillo.



Barrel cactus

(*Ferocactus cylindraceus*)

When in bloom, this cactus can appear to be wearing a crown of yellow blossoms.



Hedgehog cactus

(*Echinocereus engelmannii*)

This is not a prickly pear cactus, though the flowers are a similar color. The hedgehog cactus has longer, tricolored spines and a cylindrical shape.

Let Them Grow

Collecting vegetation is prohibited in the park. Leave wildflowers for all to enjoy!