

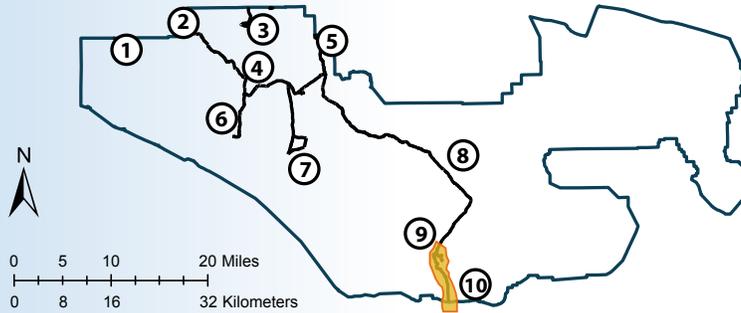
Joshua Tree

Wildflower Report

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



April 7, 2016



- ① Black Rock area
- ② West Entrance
- ③ Indian Cove
- ④ Wonderland of Rocks
- ⑤ North Entrance
- ⑥ Keys View
- ⑦ Geology Tour Rd.
- ⑧ Pinto Basin
- ⑨ Cottonwood Spring
- ⑩ Bajada

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

The bloom has taken off in the north of the park. As seems typical with this year's spring wildflower display, diversity rather than quantity is the star of the show. If you're hiking, select a trail that covers a span of elevations and habitats and you're sure to find more species than you can count!



Big and Small

From so-called "belly flowers" smaller than a quarter, to the towering plumes of the Mojave yucca, this year's wildflowers are putting on a show.

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 in bloom at Indian Cove. Widespread scale-bud and desert dandelion form most of the ground cover.



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



Photo (c) Philip Bouchard.

Desert bluebells
(*Phacelia campanularia*)
The bright indigo blue of these flowers jumps out against the russet tones of Joshua Tree's landscape.



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.



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.



Turpentine broom
(*Thamnosma montana*)
A medium-sized, glandular shrub with dark purple flowers. This plant is in the lemon family and smells strongly of citrus.



Spotted Locoweed
(*Astragalus lentiginosus*)
Locoweed has a similar structure to a lupine, but the leaves are different: the leaflets sprout from a linear axis, whereas a lupine's sprout from a single point.



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



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.



Yellow blazingstar
(*Mentzelia affinis*)
The shimmer on the petals of blazingstars is a good identifying characteristic, as well as the many stamens at the center of the flower.



Beautiful rockcress
(*Boechera pulchra*)
These delicate inflorescences of bright magenta flowers are appearing across this area.



Ground-cherry
(*Physalis crassifolia*)
This plant is a close relative of the tomatillo. When in fruit, it looks strikingly similar, producing a berry surrounded by a papery envelope.

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



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.

Annual Plants and Cacti



Desert fivespot (*Eremalche rotundifolia*)
Named for the markings at the base of its petals, this flower can appear as a pink globe in the afternoon light.



Ghostflower (*Mohavea confertifolia*)
This plant is in the snapdragon family. Look closely for its bilateral symmetry.



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!