


WILD ABOUT WILDFLOWERS



A Guide to Common Native Flowers
of Sonoma County



Wildflowers are one of the telling signs that spring has arrived – and, in California, we're lucky to be home to such a wide variety of native flowers, including many rare and endemic species. In fact, Sonoma, Napa and Mendocino counties are home to 358 species of wildflowers alone!

This is a short, handy guide to just some of the beautiful and unusual flowers of Sonoma County, many of which can be found on Sonoma Land Trust's protected preserves. For more resources on native California wildflowers, head over to the **resources section** at the end of this guide!

#SonomaCountyWildflowers

#HealthyLands

#HealthyCommunities

#NoticeNature



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BUTTER AND EGGS

Triphysaria eriantha

Petaluma is famous for its Butter and Eggs festival – which can only be named after this adorable little flower, right? 😊 This annual herb is characterized by its hairy purple stem, purple leaves and wide lower lip divided into three white-and-yellow pouches, inspiring its common name.



Grassland

Peak Season:

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR |
| MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG |
| SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |

[More Info](#)



TIDY TIPS

Layia platyglossa

In addition to being adorably named, this annual flower, distinguished by its yellow petals with white tips, attracts many species, especially butterflies, and is an important nectar plant for the threatened Checkerspot butterfly. It's also commonly found growing in serpentine soils.



Grassland

Peak Season:

| | | | |
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BLUE-EYED GRASS

Sisyrinchium bellum

This low-growing perennial stands out for its six blue/purple petals and bright yellow throat. Occasionally, this grass-like gem has white petals.



Grassland

Peak Season:

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
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JOHNNY JUMP-UP

Viola pendunculata

These delightfully bright and low-growing perennials commonly pop up on grasslands and oak woodlands starting in late winter. Indigenous Californians picked the young leaves before they flowered and boiled them for food. They're important host flowers for rare and endangered butterflies.



Grassland

Peak Season:

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|-----|-----|-----|-----|
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[More Info](#)



CHECKER MALLOW

Sidalcea malviflora

Pale to deep pink delicate flower petals sit atop the hairy stems of this common perennial, making it easy to identify across grassy slopes.



Grassland

Peak Season:

| | | | |
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SKY LUPINE

Lupinus nanus

The Latin name for Lupinus comes from lupus, or wolf, because this plant was thought to steal nutrients from the ground due to the poor soils they often grow in – but, in fact, they do the opposite, helping to fertilize the soil.



Grassland

Peak Season:

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|-----|-----|-----|-----|
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DOUGLAS IRIS

Iris douglasiana

This showy perennial beauty ranges in color from light blue violet to dark purple, as well as sometimes white or yellow, and is commonly found near ocean bluffs and grassy hillsides.



Grassland

Peak Season:

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|-----|-----|-----|-----|
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DIOGENES' LANTERN

Calochortus amabilis

Another name for this whimsical flower is Golden Fairy Lantern, inspired by the nodding yellow flower petals that resemble a hanging lantern. This perennial is endemic to Northern California.



Woodlands

Peak Season:

| | | | |
|------------|------------|-----|------------|
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PACIFIC TRILLIUM

Trillium ovatum

This lovely lily is formed by three white petals and three sepals, which rise above three leaves on a short stem. That stem differentiates this flower from other trillium. The leaves turn from white to pink as it ages.



Woodlands

Peak Season:

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CHECKER LILY

Fritillaria affinis

Look carefully for this common perennial among oaks and brush – its brown color easily blends into its surroundings. But when you find it, you’ll be stunned by this bell-shaped flower, whose colors can range from yellow and brown to green and brown to purple and black.



Woodlands

Peak Season:

| | | | |
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FETID ADDER'S TONGUE

Scoliopus bigelovii

This almost alien-looking lily, also known as a slink pod, is commonly found in moist, shady redwood forests. Its rotten smell is what earned it its descriptive name.



Woodlands

Peak Season:

| | | | |
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NARROWLEAF MILKWEED

Asclepias fascicularis

This milkweed, defined by its tall stem and clusters of lavender or lavender-tinted white flowers, is an important host plant for Monarch butterflies in California. It's also a good nectar source for many native insects.



Riparian

Peak Season:

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|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR |
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[More Info](#)



SEEP-SPRING MONKEY FLOWER

Erythranthe guttata

This is a fun, yellowish-orange, tubular flower with red dots and is typically found along the banks of streams and seeps. It's well liked by hummingbirds, as well as butterflies, and is pollinated by bees. Miwok used to boil the leaves for food or to treat skin sores.



Riparian

Peak Season:

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR |
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[More Info](#)



CALIFORNIA WILD ROSE

Rosa californica

This common native California rose is made up of five petals in any shade of pink, from nearly white to deep magenta. Indigenous Californians used to make tea from the bright red rose hip for medicinal purposes.



Riparian

Peak Season:

| | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR |
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[More Info](#)



CALIFORNIA MUGWORT

Artemisia douglasiana

It may be hard to spot this aromatic shrub's small yellow/green blooms but, in the right conditions, this perennial can be found in virtually every California county. For Indigenous Californians, the plant has both medicinal uses and ceremonial significance – used to ward off spirits of the dead and to induce vivid dreams – and is considered useful for restoration projects and erosion control.



Riparian

Peak Season:

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
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[More Info](#)



SONOMA SUNSHINE

Blennosperma bakeri

This endangered species is very similar to its cousin, the Common Blennosperma, and both are closely related to the daisy. Sonoma Sunshine is distinguished by its longer lobes. Endemic to Sonoma County, if you are lucky, you might see these rare beauties in vernal pools and wet grasslands, such as the Laguna de Santa Rosa.



Rare

Peak Season:

| | | | |
|-----|------------|------------|------------|
| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR |
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[More Info](#)



COAST LILY

Lilium maritimum

This stunning lily, made up of six red/orange curling petals and spots of purple in its golden throat, is endemic to the Northern California Coast, including northern Sonoma County. Be on the lookout for this short bloomer growing in coastal prairies, coniferous forests and bogs.



Rare

Peak Season:

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|-----|------------|------------|-----|
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[More Info](#)



BITTER ROOT

Lewisia redivivia

This low-growing perennial can be hard to spot but consider yourself lucky when you do. Ranging in color from white to deep pink or rose, Bitter Root can be found scattered throughout mountains of California, in rocky areas and sometimes serpentine. Its name was inspired by the famous Captain Lewis who, after tasting the flower, found it “nauseous to my palate.” Botanist Frederick Pursh later named it for Lewis.



Rare

Peak Season:

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
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[More Info](#)

BEST SPOTS FOR WILDFLOWER VIEWING

By City

Bodega Bay

[Kortum Trail](#)

Habitats:  

Protected by: California State Parks

[Pomo Canyon Trail](#)

Habitats:   

Protected by: Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma Ag + Open Space, California State Parks

Calistoga

[Live Oaks Ranch*](#)

Habitats:   

Protected by: Sonoma Land Trust

Glen Ellen

[Sonoma Valley Regional Park](#)

Habitats:   

Protected by: Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma Land Trust

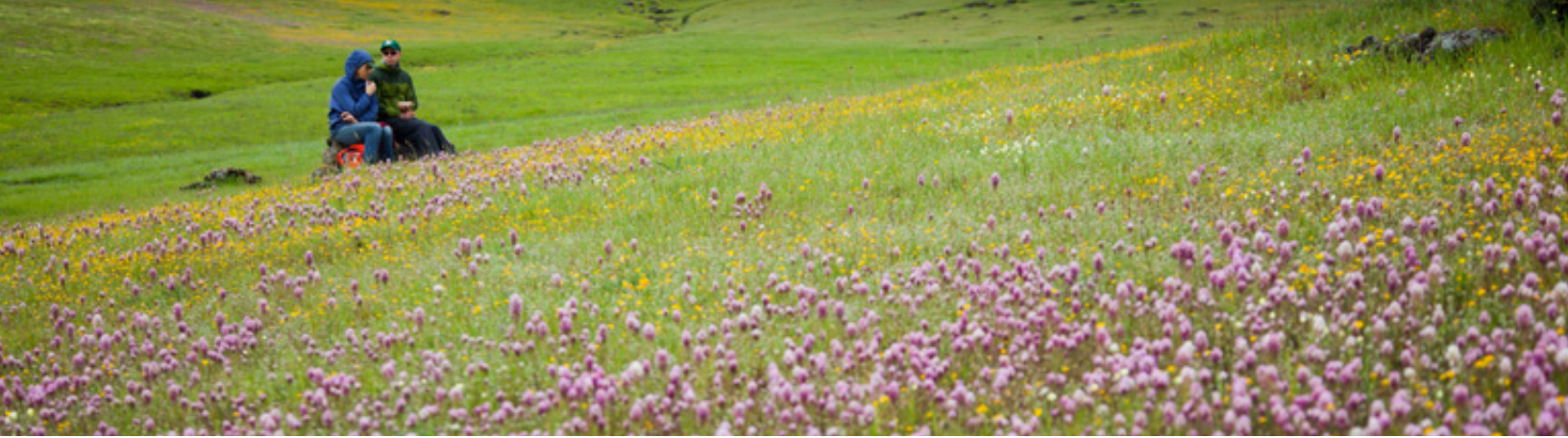
Jenner

[The Jenner Headlands/Pole Mountain Preserve](#)

Habitats:    

Protected by: Sonoma Land Trust, The Wildlands Conservancy, Sonoma Ag + Open Space





Kenwood


[Sugarloaf Ridge State Park](#)

Habitats:   

Protected by: California State Parks, Sonoma Ecology Center, Sonoma Ag + Open Space

Petaluma

[Tolay Lake Regional Park](#)

Habitats:  

Protected by: Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma Ag + Open Space, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria

Rohnert Park


[Crane Creek Regional Park](#)

Habitats:   

Protected by: Sonoma County Regional Parks

Sonoma

[Sears Point Ranch*](#)

Habitats:  

Protected by: Sonoma Land Trust



Santa Rosa

Trione-Annadel/Howarth/Spring Lake Parks

Habitats:   

Protected by: California State Parks, Santa Rosa City Parks, Sonoma County Regional Parks

Taylor Mountain Regional Park

Habitats:   

Protected by: Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma Ag + Open Space, Sonoma Land Trust

Hood Mountain Regional Park

Habitats:  

Protected by: Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma Ag + Open Space, Sonoma Land Trust

Laguna de Santa Rosa Trail

Habitats: 

Protected by: Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma Ag + Open Space



**Properties marked with an asterisk are accessible via guided hikes only due to habitat sensitivity. Please visit our website for more information.*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

“Wildflowers of Northern California’s Wine Country and North Coast Ranges,” by Reny Parker.

Calflora.org

California Native Plant Society

ABOUT SONOMA LAND TRUST

Sonoma Land Trust believes land is the heart of the community and that when the land is healthy, the community is healthy. Since 1976, Sonoma Land Trust has protected more than 52,000 acres of scenic, natural, agricultural and open land for future generations. Sonoma Land Trust is the recipient of the 2019 National Land Trust Excellence Award by the Land Trust Alliance and is accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. For more information, please visit sonomalandtrust.org or follow us on Instagram at [@sonomalandtrust](https://www.instagram.com/sonomalandtrust).

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