ANTELOPE VALLEY CALIFORNIA

Poppy Reserve



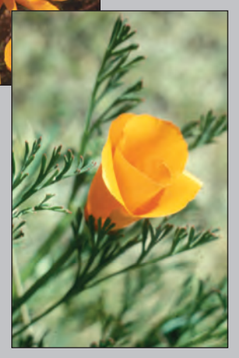


The California Poppy

Eschscholzia californica

4 to 8 petals, deep orange to yellow to white and variegated: 6” to 18” high. Annuals, perennial and biennial









The California poppy was named the state flower in 1903. At that time great fields of poppies were found throughout the state. Today, while poppies grow in many areas, the only large fields left are here in the western Antelope Valley.

La Sabanilla de San Pasqual (The Altar-cloth of St. Pascal) is the name Spanish sailors gave the glorious fields of poppies which blanketed the California shores in the late 1700s. They were referring to the shepherd saint who tended his flock far from church and village and knelt in fields of wildflowers to commune with God. It seems to be no coincidence that the area in which the most spectacular fields of poppies grew came to be known as Rancho San Pasqual, which is now known as Pasadena, Altadena and Sierra Madre. Spanish sailors described these fields as rivers of gold which flowed some 25 miles toward the ocean.

Other names for the California poppy have been Copa de Oro (Cup of Gold), Amapola and Dormidera (meaning the “sleepy one,” because the flowers close up at night, when it is cloudy or when the cold wind blows). The botanical name *Eschscholtzia* (now *Eschscholzia*) was given to the plant by poet-naturalist Adelbert Von Chamisso of the Russian scientific expedition which visited California in 1816. The name honored his lifelong friend and surgeon to the ship, Dr. Johann Eschscholtz.



Poppies



Poppies and Rabbit Brush



Perennial Poppies



Annual Poppy Field

More Flora



Joshua Tree, *Yucca brevifolia*
The Joshua tree grows naturally only in the Mojave Desert and small parts of Arizona, Utah and Nevada. This slow growing tree forms clusters of 6 petaled flowers on the end of the branches sometime in February or March.



Goldfields
Lasthenia californica
Sunflower Family. 4” to 8” tall; generally grow in masses with 500 to 800 blooms per square foot. Emit a wonderful perfume. *(above & below)*





Lacy Phacelia
Phacelia cryptantha
Waterleaf Family. Tiny blue or lavender flowers grow from curling pods at ends of the stalk; 8" to 32" in height; deeply notched fernlike leaves.



Pygmy-Leaved Lupine
Lupinus bicolor
Pea Family. Flower is up to 2” in height; plant grows low to the ground and may cover large acreage.

More Flora



Owl’s Clover
Castilleja exserta
Figwort Family. 4” to 8” stalks with maroon bracts having white tips. If you look closely at the tips you might see two eyes and a beak.



Davy Gilia
Gilia latiflora ssp. Davyi
Phlox Family. 5 petaled flower; blue on outside, pink and white on inside with black throats; 8” to 14” tall; leaves basal notched.



Bigelow Coreopsis
Leptosyne bigelovii
Sunflower Family. Ray flowers (apparent petals) have nearly square tips and have 2 tones of yellow; grows 12” to 20” high.



Blue Dicks
Dichelostemma capitatum
Several tiny 6 petaled flowers grow on top of a one to two foot reedy stem. Grows from a bulb.



Fiddleneck
Amsinckia tessellata
Tiny yellow-orange flowers grow on the curled end of a hairy stalk; up to two feet tall. Considered by many to be an unwanted weed.



Cream Cups
Platystemon californicus
Poppy Family. 6 petals, may be ice white or have butter yellow on petals; many stamens; hairy stems. 4” to 12” high.



Slender Keel Fruit
Tropidocarpum gracile
Tiny 4 petaled, yellow flowers, barely 1/4” across. Common name comes from the slender, curved seed pod. Up to 6” in height.



Red Stem Filaree
Erodium cicutarium
A very common weed seen throughout the Antelope Valley. 5 petaled flowers are pink or magenta; spreading plant is 2” to 10” in height with fernlike leaves.



Acton Daisy
(Acton encelia, Brittlebush)
Encelia virginensis ssp. actoni
Ragged yellow flowers on long stems from a silver-green leaved bush from two to four feet high.



Red Maids
Calandrinia menziesii
Rose red and round-tipped petals, many stamens. Plant is spreading, up to 16 inches in height.



Hairy Lotus
Acmispon strigosus
Tiny yellow flowers barely 3/8” in diameter, turning red as they mature. Tends to form a mat on the ground, rarely over 3” high.



Douglas Locoweed Seedpods
Astragalus douglasii
Pea Family. Tiny, pale yellow flowers with violet tips, large yellow hollow seed pods; 12" to 24" tall.



Douglas Locoweed Bloom



Desert or Wild Parsley
Lomatium mohavense
A crown of tiny yellow flowers top a 4" to 16" stalk; green, lacy leaves cover the stalk.

Life in the Poppy Reserve

Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, & More



Pronghorn Antelope *Atilocapra americana*. A once common resident that has disappeared from the area.



Black-tailed Jackrabbit *Lepus californicus*. A common desert hare with large ears.



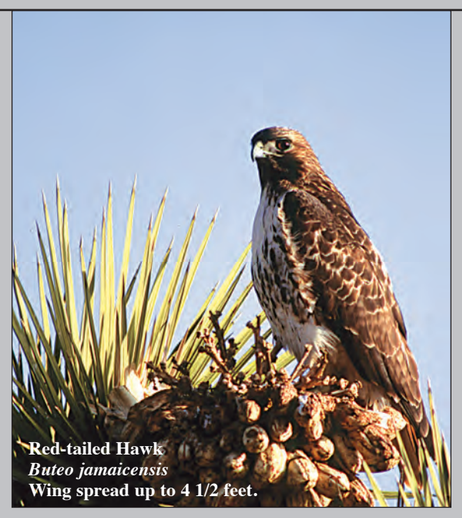
Antelope Ground Squirrel *Ammospermophilus leucurus*. Has a white tail which it keeps on its back.



Badger, *Taxidea taxus*. Tejon Ranch and Fort Tejon were named after this animal. "Tejon" is Spanish for badger.



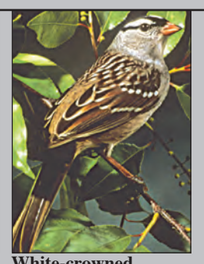
Desert Cottontail *Sylvilagus audubonii*. Smaller than the jackrabbit. Lives in burrows.



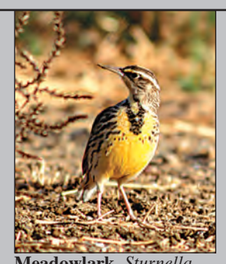
Red-tailed Hawk
Buteo jamaicensis
Wing spread up to 4 1/2 feet.



Burrowing Owl, *Athene cunicularia*. Uses abandoned burrows for its home.



White-crowned Sparrow, *Zonotrichia leucophrys*. Has white stripes on its head.



Meadowlark, *Sturnella neglecta*. Commonly seen sitting on fence posts.



California Quail *Callipepla californica*. Usually seen on the ground.



Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus* Takes short flights. Is seen mostly running on ground.



Coyote, *Canis latrans*.
Very quick to learn. Will eat almost anything.



Mojave Rattlesnake *Crotalus scutulatus*. Venom has both nerve and blood cell toxins.



Bobcat, *Lynx rufus*.
Short tail – 15 to 35 lbs.



California Kingsnake *Lampropeltis getula californiae*. Has brown or black and yellow bands.



Side-blotched Lizard, *Uta stansburiana*.
The black "blotch" behind the front legs gives this lizard its name.

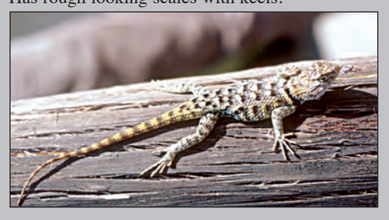
Gopher Snake, *Pituophis catenifer.* Small head and neck distinguish it from rattlesnakes.





Desert Horned Lizard, *Phrynosoma platyrhinos*. Look for "horns" on the back of the head.

Desert Spiny Lizard, *Sceloporus magister.* Has rough looking scales with keels.





Painted Lady Butterfly, *Vanessa cardui*. Wingspan 1 1/2" to 2 1/4".



Ladybird Beetle *Hippodamia convergens*. A beneficial insect.

Past and Present



The Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve

The Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve State Natural Reserve was established in 1976 to protect outstanding displays of native wildflowers, particularly the California poppy, *Eschscholzia californica*, the state flower.

The 1,800-acre state reserve is located on California's most consistent poppy bearing land. It is 15 miles west of Lancaster, California, nestled in the Antelope Buttes. Poppies share the desert grassland with species of owl's clover, lupine, goldfields, creamcups, coreopsis and other native wildflowers, producing a mosaic of color. As nature is of course unpredictable, the intensity and duration of the wildflower bloom varies yearly.

Eight miles of trails, including a paved section for wheelchair access, gently wind through the fields of wildflowers. Whether you enjoy expansive fields of wildflower colors or the closeup study of a single flower, this is the place to visit. The reserve is also a sanctuary for desert dwelling animals. This treasure of native flora and fauna is protected at the California Poppy Reserve for the enjoyment, inspiration and education of the people for all time to come.



Jane S. Pinheiro Interpretive Center

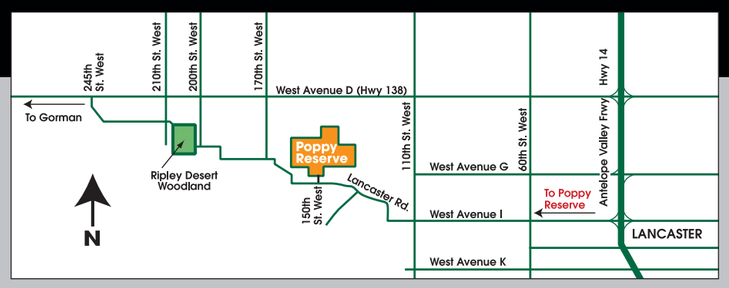
The 2,000-square-foot Jane S. Pinheiro Interpretive Center was opened in 1982. Named for Jane Pinheiro, a longtime Antelope Valley resident, the center houses educational displays of many of the plants and animals found on the reserve. It was through Jane's efforts, combined with many others, that the Poppy Reserve was established. She labored tirelessly to preserve areas of wildflowers, Joshua trees and other native wildlands. She dreamed of a poppy park where our state flower would be preserved for future generations to love and enjoy.

Many of her paintings are displayed in the interpretive center. Though she had no formal art training, she worked in watercolor, one of the most difficult mediums, to produce many beautiful and accurate renderings of wildflowers.

The Jane S. Pinheiro Interpretive Center was designed to blend with and complement the natural setting of the Poppy Reserve with low environmental impact, allowing the natural beauty of the poppies and other wildflowers to have center stage.

Maps

Location map

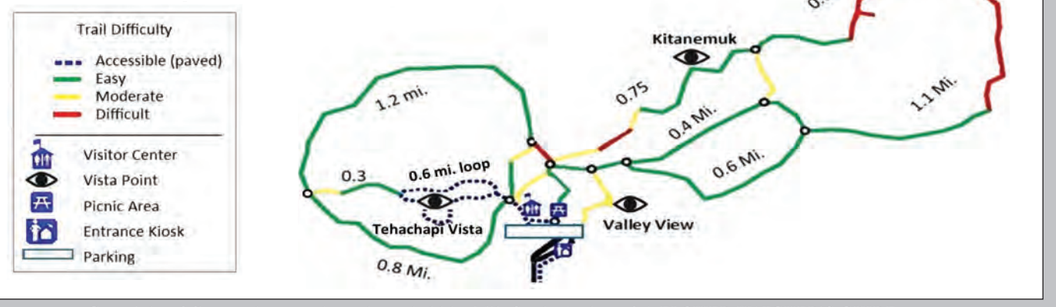


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California State Parks Mission Statement

The mission of California State Parks is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve
Trail Map



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