As winter winds down and spring moves in, the Foundation gears up for a series of exciting seasonal events – and you’re invited!

This spring, we celebrate California flora with our 12th Annual Native Plant Garden Tour; a two-day Poppy Days plant sale; and the California Native Plant Week Symposium, Wildflower Show and Plant Sale – three great ways to appreciate our natural heritage, learn more about gardening with native plants and support TPF. Read on for details.

12TH ANNUAL THEODORE PAYNE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN TOUR
Saturday & Sunday, March 21 & 22, 10:00am-5:00pm

Our biggest event of the year: a two-day, county-wide self-guided journey through 47 beautiful and inspiring private and public landscapes, including 21 that are new to the tour.

Tickets: members $30, non-members $35; groups of 10 or more $30/person

Purchase online at theodorepayne.org; by phone at 818-768-1802; at TPF headquarters during business hours (Tuesday-Saturday, 8:30am-4:30pm); and at the following locations:

- The G2 Gallery, 1503 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice 90291
  Monday-Saturday, 10:00am-7:00pm; Sunday, 10:00am-6:00pm
- Potted, 3158 Los Feliz Blvd., Atwater Village 90039
  Monday-Saturday, 10:00am-6:00pm; Sunday, 10:00am-5:00pm
- SEA Lab, 1021 North Harbor Dr., Redondo Beach 90277
  Tuesday-Friday, 9:00am-3:30pm; Saturday, 10:00am-4:00pm

Each tour garden contains at least 50% native plants and was created in harmony with Southern California’s climate, soil, natural vegetation and native wildlife. At each location, you’ll meet garden owners, designers and TPF docents.

The gardens are divided into two groups with specific gardens open each day.

Saturday: Primarily on the Westside, from Santa Monica to the South Bay

In addition to being beautiful, gardens on the tour help save money and conserve resources through reduced water consumption and lowered maintenance. The gardens also support native bird and insect populations. These unique landscapes are sustainable, creative and distinctly Californian. A wide variety of garden styles, budgets and sizes are represented. Examples of container gardens, native grass lawns and a no mowing-required meadow are included, along with rainwater harvesting and other water catchment designs.

Visit the Garden Tour website, nativeplantgardentour.org, for details, photographs and plant lists for each of the 47 gardens. Use the online descriptions to plan your itinerary; most attendees visit five to seven gardens each day. Each ticket purchaser receives a 32-page Garden Tour Guide with garden addresses, details, a map and more.

A welcoming entrance at the Russell Garden, Brentwood, open for touring Sunday, March 22.
NATIVE PLANT WEEK SYMPOSIUM, WILDFLOWER SHOW & PLANT SALE
Saturday, April 18, 9:00am-4:00pm
At Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd.,
Encino 91436
Co-sponsored by TPF and the California Native Plant Society,
LA/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter. Details at lacnps.org.
This annual free event in Encino features excellent presentations, educational exhibits, wildflower displays gathered from TPF and private gardens, book and map sales, and a plant sale provided by the Theodore Payne Nursery (with discounts to TPF members). Children are welcome. Parking is ample and free, and snacks available for purchase.
New this year:
• 10:00-11:30am "Finding LA's Hidden Wildlife through Citizen Science" by Lila Higgins, Manager, Citizen Science and Live Animals, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.
• Noon-1:30pm "Chumash Indian Plant Knowledge" by Jan Timbrook, Ph.D., Curator of Ethnography, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, and author of Chumash Ethnobotany.
• 2:00-3:30pm "The Small Space Native Garden: Creating Intimate Outdoor Spaces" by Steve Gerischer, owner of Larkspur Garden Design and president of the Southern California Horticultural and Pacific Horticulture societies.

Happy Spring to all of our members and supporters!
A "Hidden Gem" No More

Do you remember the first time you visited the Foundation? Perhaps after a long drive, uncertain where you were headed, and then pretty certain you weren’t in the right location when you saw the dirt road. Maybe more rustic than you’d expected, the Foundation, a place apart from the everyday, was waiting for you.

These days, with all the changes to our site, one of our goals is to retain that feeling of a special place, but an equally important objective is to break free of our “best-kept secret” status. We have been working hard on that one.

The garden tour, of course, is the Foundation’s biggest annual event, and this year we hope to make an even bigger impression. Through a partnership with KPCC, we are promoting the tour with radio spots to a widespread regional audience. Through our partners The G2 Gallery in Venice, Potted in Atwater Village and SEA Lab in Redondo Beach, we are selling garden tour tickets throughout the region. By arranging clusters of tour gardens in the South Bay and San Fernando Valley, we aim to expand our reach and inspire more native plant landscapers in their own parts of L.A.

TPF’s partnership with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power means that hundreds of homeowners in the process of converting conventional lawns to sustainable gardens will find out about TPF just at the moment they need help the most. (If you see these novice gardeners in the sales yard, be sure to give them some encouragement. Their gardens are about to become much more rewarding.)

We are also raising TPF’s profile within the professional community. This January, fully one-third of the staff presented at the triennial conservation conference of the California Native Plant Society in San Jose. Presentations included:

- "Adult education: Look, Ma, no lawn!” by Lili Singer, Director of Special Projects and Adult Education
- "Local Source Initiative: How locally sourced garden plants contribute to native plant conservation" by Genevieve Arnold, Seed Program Manager
- "Managing root rots in nursery grown California natives” by Tim Becker, Nursery Manager
- "Native plant public projects: One spectacular failure and two subsequent successes" by Lisa Novick, Director of Outreach and K-12 Education
- "From idea to practice: The role of native plant nurseries in conservation, restoration and outreach" by Madena Asbell, Director of Horticulture

This unprecedented opportunity for TPF staff to present to their peers was supported by board members Michael and Megan Hamilton and Snowdy Dodson. We thank them.

Of course, the tried-and-true way to spread the word about the Foundation and its mission is word of mouth. I want to thank all of you who talk to your friends and neighbors about TPF and the value of native plants. Many of our new visitors report that they found out about TPF through personal contact. Others learn about us at our outreach and community gardening events – staff and volunteers promote the Foundation every month at the Hollywood Farmers’ Market and at more than 100 other events each year.

This spring, we hope you’ll join us in ensuring that the Foundation becomes a special place for more Californians. Go on the Native Plant Garden Tour – and bring a friend! Come to Poppy Days, our big spring sale, and take home some beautiful native plants! And, please, keep talking about the Foundation.

– Kitty Connolly, Executive Director

The Poppy Print is the membership newsletter of the Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers and Native Plants, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the understanding, preservation and use of California native plants. The Theodore Payne Nursery and Store are open to the public year round. We offer classes and field trips for adults and children. Learn more about the Foundation and gardening with native plants at theodorepayne.org.

Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers and Native Plants, Inc. | 10459 Tuxford Street, Sun Valley, CA 91352
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SPRING 2015 EVENTS AND CLASSES

Register on-line at theodorepayne.org or by phone to (818) 768-1802 or in person at our Sun Valley headquarters. Visit our website, theodorepayne.org, for complete information on classes and instructors, and details on our Three-part California Native Plant Garden Design course.

Cancellation policy: No refunds for cancellations made within seven days of the class date. The TPF Speakers Bureau offers presentations for community groups, garden clubs and public agencies.

Field trips and in-classroom visits for K-12 students are also available. Contact: Lisa Novick, lisa@theodorepayne.org.

MARCH

12th Annual Theodore Payne Native Plant Garden Tour
Saturday & Sunday, March 21 & 22, 10:00am-5:00pm
A self-guided county-wide tour of 47 beautiful and inspiring gardens. Details on page 1.

Poppy Days Spring Plant Sale
Save on plants, seed and TPF gear – with discounts to all!
Friday & Saturday, March 28 & 29, 8:30am-4:30pm
Details on page 2.

APRIL

First Thursday Bird Walk with Ken Gilliland
Thursday, April 2, 8:00-10:00am
Free. RSVP to info@theodorepayne.org.
An easy morning ramble on TPF's scenic canyon land, where more than 50 different species of birds have been seen. Bring your binoculars, hat and water. Ken is an accomplished birdwatcher and avian artist (empken.com) and former TPF webmaster. Repeats first Thursdays through June.

First Saturday: Volunteer Day at TPF
Saturday, April 4, 9:00am-noon
RSVP to andrew@theodorepayne.org
Join the Theodore Payne Foundation family of volunteers to improve and care for our gardens. We will clear, clean, plant, mulch, prune and do other tasks to spruce up the grounds and show how beautiful native plant gardens can be. Bring your binoculars, hat and water. Ken is an accomplished birdwatcher and avian artist (empken.com) and former TPF webmaster. Repeats first Saturdays through June.

California Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer
Saturday, April 4, 8:30am-12:30 pm
$45 members, $55 non-members
The basics on gardening with California flora: why natives are valuable, about plant communities, plus planting techniques, establishment, irrigation, pruning and ongoing maintenance. Recommended for beginners; prerequisite to our California Native Plant Horticulture class. Enrollment is limited to eight projects to ensure individual attention. Complete details at theodorepayne.org/calendar.html.

Look, Ma, No Lawn! with Lili Singer
Saturday, April 11, 1:30-3:30pm
$25 members, $35 non-members
Are you ready to lose the lawn? We’ll explain how to take it out and offer alternatives for the space – specifically low-care native plants that need no fertilizer and use a fraction of the water required for turf. For instructor bio, see April 4.

Native Plant Garden Maintenance with Madena Asbell
Friday, April 17, 11:30am-3:30pm
$45 members, $55 non-members
Subjects covered include watering, fertilizing (or not), pruning, grooming, mulching and other aspects of garden maintenance. You’ll also discover how native plants respond to pruning cuts (good and bad), what we trigger with our gardening activities, and how to develop good maintenance goals. Madena is TPF’s Director of Horticulture.

NEW! Spring Gathering Workshop with Kat High
Saturday, April 18, 1:30-3:30pm
$25 members, $35 non-members
This workshop centers around what’s up and ready for harvest at class time – most likely including miner’s lettuce, mugwort, stinging nettles and elderberry flowers – with tips on how to grow, gather and use them at home; a slide show of plants in the instructor’s neighborhood; and a walk on TPF grounds to look for “little green things.” Kat is a Native Californian of Hupa descent. Trained by elders in Native American land management traditions, she teaches others how to adapt those principles to the modern world and offers environmental education as a traditional path through this time of climate change.

THREE-PART CALIFORNIA NATIVE GARDEN DESIGN

Choose one of these three-session series:
- Fridays, April 10 & 24, and May 8, 11:30am-3:30pm, with Joshua Link
- Fridays, May 1, 15 & 29, 11:30am-3:30pm with Amy Nettleton
- Saturdays, June 6 & 20, and July 11, 8:30am-12:30pm with Armstrong & Walker
- Saturdays, July 18, August 1 & 15, 8:30am-12:30pm, with Andreas Hessing
- Saturdays, August 29, September 12 & 26, 8:30am-12:30pm, with Joshua Link
$225 members, $275 non-members
$285 member couples, $335 non-member couples

This comprehensive course for home gardeners offers a sound foundation in design styles and processes, sustainable landscape practices, and how to model a garden after patterns in nature. Prerequisite: our California Native Plant Horticulture class. Enrollment is limited to eight projects to ensure individual attention. Complete details at theodorepayne.org/calendar.html.

MAY

First Saturday: Volunteer Day at TPF
Saturday, May 2, 9:00am-noon
For details, see April 4.

Propagating California Native Plants with Tim Becker
Saturday, May 2, 9:00am-noon
$50 members, $60 non-members
Learn basic skills of vegetative propagation with TPF’s Nursery Manager! Various species of native plants will be discussed and started from cuttings or divisions in this hands-on session, and you’ll leave with a flat of cuttings for your own garden! Tim oversees TPF’s growing operations from plant propagation to retail sales. Limit: 8.
Irrigation Practices for Native Plant Gardens with Tim Becker
Saturday, May 2, 1:30-3:30pm
$30 members, $40 non-members
This class for home gardeners discusses irrigation principles, techniques and equipment best suited for native plant landscapes – with practical examples and plenty of time for questions. For instructor bio, see previous listing.

First Thursday Bird Walk with Ken Gilliland
Thursday, May 7, 8:00-10:00am
For details, see April 2.

California Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer
Saturday, May 16, 8:30am-12:30pm
For details, see April 4.

Hypertufa Container Workshop with Steve Gerischer
Saturday, May 16, 1:30-3:30pm
$30 members, $40 non-members
A super-fun, hands-on messy activity for grown-ups! Using cement, perlite and coir, each attendee will make a relatively lightweight container that resembles a time-weathered stone trough. Wear old clothes and shoes. All materials provided.
Steve divides his time between his award-winning company, Larkspur Garden Design, and lecturing on topics relating to gardening in Southern California. He also serves as president of the Southern California Horticultural Society.

Native Plant Garden Maintenance with Madena Asbell
Saturday, May 23, 8:30am-12:30pm
For details, see April 17.

Look, Ma, No Lawn! with Lili Singer
Saturday, May 23, 1:30-3:30pm
For details, see April 11.

Sketching from Nature Workshop for Beginners with 2014 TPF Artist-in-Residence Mara Lonner
Saturday, May 30, 11:00am-3:30pm
$70 members, $90 non-members
Develop your drawing and observation skills in this low-key class for people with little or no drawing experience. Learn the basics of materials and practice drawing indoors and outdoors in your own sketchbook. All materials provided. Bring lunch, hat and water bottle.
Mara is a widely exhibited local artist, lecturer at UC Irvine, and former instructor at CalArts and Long Beach City College. Her exhibition in the Theodore Payne Gallery opens March 21. See page 7 for details. Limit: 12; early registration recommended.

JUNE

First Thursday Bird Walk with Ken Gilliland
Thursday, June 4, 8:00-10:00am
The last bird walk of the season. For details, see April 2.

First Saturday: Volunteer Day at TPF
Saturday, June 6, 9:00am-noon
The last First Saturday of the season. For details, see April 4.

Four Seasons of Color with California Natives with Lili Singer
Saturday, June 6, 1:00-3:30pm
$25 members, $35 non-members
A program for plant lovers! Your native plant garden can be a seasonal showcase of flowers, seed, fruit and foliage. This program showcases trees, shrubs, vines, perennials and grasses that will ensure year-round color. For instructor bio, see April 4.

California Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer
Saturday, June 13, 8:30am-12:30pm
For details, see April 4.

Many Uses of Yucca Workshop with Kat High
Saturday, June 13, 1:30-3:30pm
$25 members, $35 non-members
Learn and experience what the mighty chaparral yucca – Hesperoyucca (Yucca) whipplei – has to offer us for food, cordage, medicine and more! Class includes hands-on activities and native food tasting. For instructor bio, see April 18.
The Foundation appreciates and values the following donations:

10,000  Alan & Rebecca Duke
1,500   Peggy Brutsche
1,000   AJ Crawford, Adelle Lutz, Andrea Ursillo
500    Daniel Fink, Ito Family (in memory of Kensaku Ito), Robert Lydecker, Hartmut Wisch (professional development)
300    Chuck Petithomme
250    Ruth M. Borun, Barbara Burke (in memory of Frank Burke), Beth Burman Trust, Mike & Karen Layfield, Donielle Killian, Joel Krajewski, Donald & Giuliana Songster, Kathy Tardy
225    Marcia Anne Good
210    Denise Moore
200    Cassy Aoyagi, Alison Burnett, Stephanie Hernstadt, Elizabeth & John Wagner
125    Ruth Deosaransingh
110    Sue DeKany
100    Jennifer Absey & Craig Hunter, Jeffrey Allsbrook, Anonymous, Phil Barnes (seed program), Alton Berg, Valerie Barsky, Daniel Cavanaugh, Anne Chomyn, Linda Conlon, Bruce Dickieson & Julia Quinn, James Dittmer, Mary Harrison, Kathryn Itomura, Kathleen Linowski (in memory of Stephen Linowski), Eric & Tracy Long, Patricia McKee, Wanda Martin, Linda Matthews, Amy Nettleton, Joseph Phillips, Kimberly Richey & Michael L. Richey White, John & Marilyn Secker, Matthew A. Seeney & Lucinda Strub (educational facilities), Doris & Jerry Selmer, Dorothy Shepherd, Judy & Stuart Spence, Jessica Thompson, Corinne Tripp, Bert Turney, David Valentich (in memory of Evelyn’s Mom), Tina Vince, Maja Vrvilo, Darrel Wanner, Peter Wendel

VEHICLE DONATION
2,925  Liz Johnson
675   Paul Law

LAWN REBATE
280   Art Center College of Design

AMAZON WISH LIST PURCHASES
Kathleen Orth: nursery cart and glass seed jars
Janet Kim: drill set
Anonymous: glass seed jars

ALSO
John Wickham: stock garden plants
Daniel Fink: cordless drill

We regret any omissions or inaccuracies on this list.
To report these, please contact our office at 818 768-1802 or info@theodorepayne.org
Mara Lonner: So much, nothing
March 21 through June 27, 2015
Opening Reception: Saturday, March 21, 2:00-4:30pm with artist talk at 3:00pm

Mara Lonner was the 2014 Theodore Payne Foundation Artist-in-Residence and the fifth artist to hold that position. Her exhibition was postponed last year due to construction on the new educational facilities. Mara is a contemporary artist who exhibits her work in national and international galleries. She was interviewed by Pamela Burgess, chair of the Theodore Payne Arts Council.

Describe your evolution as an artist.
In high school, I had an opportunity to enroll in some horticulture classes. Later, I enrolled in Pierce College to become a landscape designer or forest ranger. After a year and a half, I realized that I needed to accommodate my creativity. So I walked across the street to West Valley Occupational Center and, after two years, received a certificate in patternmaking and clothing design.

I worked in the garment business for six years in L.A. and New York, and collaborated with a friend on Broadway theatrical costuming. At the same time, I was taking art classes through UCLA Extension and Santa Monica College. After opening my own design business making jewelry, custom clothing and interior design, I realized that art was where I really belonged. I went back to school and got a BFA and MFA in visual art from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts).

What appeals to you about our native flora?
Born and raised in California, the indigenous landscape is embedded in me. I’m fond of it. I like the diverse selection of plants that provide habitats for animals, and the color, texture, form, smell and scale of our native flora.

How did you connect to TPF?
Before I became aware of TPF, my husband and I purchased our first home. I wanted to change the gardens but was not impressed with the limited availability of drought-tolerant plants. It was mostly cacti, succulents and pampas grass. In 2005, I came across an article in the L.A. Times on salvias, which immediately piqued my interest. A gardener friend introduced me to TPF. On my first visit, I fell in love and have been a member of the Foundation for 10 years.

Describe your TPF Artist-in-Residence project.
My work is about loss and extinction. It began after 9/11 when I started archiving images of bombed-out buildings and buildings destroyed through extreme weather events. I’m also very affected by stories about children, incarcerations and injustice. But I have to read them to go deeper where it affects me. I have great empathy for animals. Research led me to discover Martha, the last passenger pigeon. I made a drawing of her out of black velvet, using a textile process that removes the pile and leaves the netting.

This work led to my investigation in 2006 of the local bird population that was leaving the area because of the destruction of native habitat. Through my discussions with Kimball Garrett, Ornithology Collections Manager at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, and examinations of the bird vaults at the museum, I began to focus on the elements that have influenced my current TPF project. The work for my exhibition correlates the missing birds and native habitat in velvet drawings, monoprints and a wrap-around wall painting created specifically for this show. (Note: Last year was the 100th anniversary of Martha’s death.)

Mara Lonner is also a wonderful teacher. Her drawing workshop at the Foundation last summer received rave reviews! She will be teaching another art workshop at TPF on Saturday, May 30. Details on page 5.
What to Do in the Garden Now

**PLANT** Good candidates for spring planting include: desert species (these receive summer monsoons in the wild), such as desert willow, apricot mallow, palo verde; riparian plants (these have constant or intermittent access to water), such as western columbine, western sycamore, mugwort); shade lovers, such as rushes and ferns; and most grasses. Coastal gardeners have plenty of leeway, as the soil stays cooler there than it does inland. Consult our expert nursery staff for more recommendations.

**SOW** An assortment of native perennials can be sown now. See Seed Room Chaff, below. Also: warm-season grasses, including individual species and our Warm-Season Grass Mixture.

**WATER** Established and mature native plants need occasional slow, deep irrigation to keep them healthy and pest resistant. In most situations, a thorough soak every two to three weeks should suffice.

New transplants require regular irrigation for one or more years, until they’re established. Check soil moisture often and water only when the top few inches are dry. Always soak both the original rootball and surrounding soil thoroughly and deeply.

**MULCH** A 3”-4” layer of mulch – either organic matter (leaves, bark and wood chips and fibers, especially materials from your own garden) or decorative rock or gravel – helps retain soil moisture; moderates soil temperatures; suppresses weeds; prevents runoff; and beautifies the garden. No mulch should touch the crowns, trunks or stems of plants.

Support highly beneficial, ground-nesting native bees and wasps: leave some sunny areas mulch free.

**PEST MANAGEMENT** Dislodge aphids on new growth with a strong stream of water; those you miss will be found and eaten by beneficial insects.

Hoe or hand-pull spring annual weeds, including crabgrass, veldt grass (*Erharta*) and lamb’s quarters, before they flower and set and distribute seed. Dig deeply to remove dandelion, filaree and other perennial invaders with extensive root systems.

**PRUNE** Pinch or tip-prune young shrubs to encourage dense growth and increase flower production. Good candidates include *Eriogonum giganteum* (St. Catherine’s laced), *Encelia californica* (bush sunflower) and *Salvia* (sage). Best times: early spring before flower buds form or after spring flowering.

Remove suckers from the bases of these trees: *Lyonothamnus floribundus* ssp. *aspleniifolius* (Santa Cruz Island ironwood), *Umbellularia californica* (California bay) and *Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea* (blue elderberry).

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By Genevieve Arnold, Seed Program Manager

**Thank you to the following seed donors:**

*Afshim and Maryam Beyazee:* *Heteromeles arbutifolia*  
*Steve Bryant:* *Asclepias subulata, Baileya multiradiata, Bloomeria crocea, Cuscuta californica, Delphinium cardinale, Dichelostemma ida-maia, Fallugia paradoxa, Lilium humboldtii, Paeonia californica, Salvia columbariae, Thamnosma montana*

*Kitty Connolly:* *Quercus engelmannii*  
*Steve Hartman:* *Aristolochia californica*

*Lynnette Kampe:* *Heteromeles arbutifolia*  
*Petra Kapolli:* *Aesculus californica*

*Louise Olson:* *Baileya multiradiata, Euphorbia misera*  
*John Sennick:*  
*Heteromeles arbutifolia*  
*Kathy Sturdevant:* *Abutilon palmeri, Keckiella cordifolia*

We appreciate that folks think of TPF when their native gardens go to seed!

Thanks also to **Kathy Sturdevant** for donating clean, de-labeled jars for seed storage.

**Ready for Spring Sowing**

Though fall is prime time for sowing annual wildflower seeds, many perennial species can be started from seed in spring, as long as water is provided to get them off to a good start. *Eschscholzia californica* (California poppy) can act as a short-lived perennial and can be sown any time of year. *Achillea millefolium* (common yarrow) and *Festuca rubra* ‘Molate’ (Molate creeping red fescue) may be sown in partial or dappled shade for ground cover. *Baileya multiradiata* (desert marigold), *Linum lewisii* (blue flax), *Penstemon spectabilis* (showy penstemon) and *Sisyrinchium bellum* (blue-eyed grass) are all colorful species that fill in and complement native gardens.

And let us not forget the milkweeds, which should be sown in spring and will provide butterfly habitat for many species, including the Striated Queen and the Monarch! TPF carries three species of milkweed seed: *Asclepias fascicularis* (narrow-leaf milkweed), *A. eriocarpa* (Kotolo milkweed) and *A. speciosa* (showy milkweed).

Come visit us in the TPF store for suggestions and techniques for spring sowing! TPF members now receive 10% off seed year round – and 15% during Poppy Days, March 27 & 28 (non-members, 10% off during the sale).
Pacific Coast Iris and their Hybrids
By Madena Asbell, Director of Horticulture

Irises are admired the world over for their beautiful, uniquely shaped, intricately colored flowers. In California, we boast of 21 native species and subspecies of iris, six of which are rare or threatened. They are commonly referred to as Pacific Coast or Pacifica Iris. The many cultivars now available in nurseries are called Pacific Coast Hybrids, or PCH Iris. An array of native irises will be available at our Poppy Days Spring Plant Sale, Friday & Saturday, March 27 & 28.

California’s native irises are evergreen perennials and rhizomatous, meaning plants grow from modified underground stems called rhizomes, not from bulbs. Flowers are most abundant from mid-to-late March, and flower colors run the full gamut of the rainbow, including pastel and vivid hues, often with ruffles and contrasting borders.

Iris Flower Anatomy
Fun fact: the parts of an iris flower are always arranged in threes. The three upright petals are the standards. The three downward sepals—called falls—may or may not be veined, but they almost always have a bright (often yellow) or contrasting spot—or signal—in the center. Just above the falls are three small modified pistils called style arms or style branches. Altogether, iris flowers have evolved into “landing pads” to attract and accommodate insect pollinators that transfer pollen from one flower to another.

Tips for Planting and Care
Native irises are best planted from fall through mid-spring. They prefer morning sun and afternoon shade. It is important not to set them too deeply. That is, after planting and watering in, no part of the fan-like foliage should be buried. Native irises like good drainage but can tolerate heavier clay soils, if watered less frequently.

Water new transplants regularly the first year and reduce frequency in subsequent years, as plants become established. Once established, native irises need occasional to moderate irrigation.

Because our native irises hail from a mediterranean climate, most prefer to be relatively dry in the summer. Plants are susceptible to soil-borne pathogens that cause root rot, and excessive summer watering can kill them.

Although they are native, Pacifica irises can be fussy in Southern California gardens. Bob Sussman, owner of Matilija Nursery in Moorpark and president of the Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris, points out that our soils and temperatures are very different from conditions where many of these hybrids were bred. At his Ventura County nursery, Sussman is developing hybrids that are more adaptable to hot summers and alkaline soils. TPF is also working on potential new introductions grown from seed.

Established clumps can be divided. This is best done in November or December, after temperatures have cooled and the rainy season has begun. Do not attempt to divide irises in spring, when plants are about to go dormant for the summer.

In the right spots with the right care, Pacific Coast Iris will enhance your garden with spring color for many years to come.

Resources
California Native Plant Database, theodorepayne.org
Society for Pacific Coast Native Iris, pacificcoastiris.org
Leonine Iris, photos of hundreds of different Pacific Coast Iris, leonineiris.com/l9i_photogallery/l9i_photogallery.php?dir=Iris.Pacific Coast
Kathy Tardy
By Andrew Chaves, Manager of Operations and Volunteer Engagement

It’s inevitable that when you visit TPF, you’ll see volunteers helping customers choose plants and writing up sales slips in the nursery or ringing them up in the shop. These volunteers are very important in keeping our operations running smoothly. But most TPF patrons don’t see what goes on behind the scenes. The Seed Program, for example, operates largely “backstage,” away from the public eye.

You probably won’t see Kathy Tardy. She donates her time in the Seed Room, processing seed under the supervision of Seed Program Manager Genevieve Arnold. Since 2013, Kathy has cleaned, accessioned, weighed, stored, packaged, sowed, harvested and conducted viability checks on many species of native plant seed. She plays a vital role in assuring that TPF seed collections are carefully processed for retail sale and for use by TPF’s propagation crew. I recently asked Kathy about her experience with native plant gardening and her impressions of the Foundation.

Have you always been interested in gardening? Although my parents were always great gardeners, and I reaped the benefit of having a lovely yard to enjoy as a child, my personal interest in gardening evolved slowly, until I became fascinated by native California plants about 15 years ago.

What sparked your interest in California native plants? Plant communities and native plants was a section of a docent training class I took in L.A. about 15 years ago. That introduction to local native plant communities, coupled with leading hikes for young children in the Santa Monica Mountains, awakened me to the spectacular sights and scents of flora found in our local mountains. I loved learning how indigenous fauna thrived in specific plant communities and on particular plants.

Do you have a favorite California native plant? I don’t really have a specific favorite, but I love sage because of the heady scents and the multiplicity of species and colors. I also love manzanita because of its red bark and the diversity of species, size and shapes and blossoms.

How were you introduced to the Foundation and its volunteer program? I heard about TPF some 15 years ago as an excellent source of native plants. I visited and purchased plants. Three years ago, however, I became committed to integrating native plants in my yard, in order to reduce water use and encourage native bees, butterflies, birds and lizards. I found Theodore Payne’s educational classes to be not only pragmatic but highly inspirational. It was a short jump for me to go from buyer of plants, seeds, books and education to enthusiastic volunteer. I loved the first garden tour I attended and realized I could help the Foundation while expanding my own knowledge base.

Which volunteer activities do you look forward to? Why do you keep coming back to working with seeds? I love working with Genevieve in the Seed Room because she is an amazing font of information, a great teacher and because each different seed type is a new marvel: the life of a whole plant or tree with amazing uniqueness contained inside a tiny (in some cases almost invisible to the naked eye) seed.

Do you garden with CA natives? What do you find most challenging? I’ve had a native plant garden since fall of 2011, when I took a three-part garden design class at Theodore Payne and started removing 2,000 square feet of lawn. I’ve been building my yard ever since, planting annually each winter and adding plants with different bloom times and colors. The challenging part is knowing if and when to water and how not to overwater. It’s also extremely important to know your soil type and sun exposure (especially with hot summers) and to buy plants that will thrive in those conditions.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about volunteering at TPF? I tell them it is a great place to volunteer because of the wide variety of volunteer jobs available, GREAT staff that are friendly, welcoming and helpful, and nursery grounds that are filled with beautiful plants to peruse. Andrew leads a very fun, interesting and informative orientation program and makes everyone feel welcome.

What do you do when you aren’t volunteering? I spend lots of time in my garden in winter and spring, either planting new plants or weeding out undesirables. In addition, I tutor reading at a special education school, keep up with my five grandchildren, travel, hike and backpack and read as much as possible.

What might someone be surprised to know about you? I love backpacking and have hiked three 14,000-foot peaks in the last two years. I’m heading out again this summer into the High Sierras, where I hope to see the amazingly hardy high-elevation plants that go through their whole blooming cycle in a matter of weeks.

Are there any other thoughts you’d like to share? I’d love to see Theodore Payne Foundation encourage large nurseries such at Armstrong’s or Home Depot or Lowes to sell more natives and demonstrate how water wise doesn’t mean cacti and succulents from other parts of the world.
CELEBRATING OUR volunteers

Intrepid First Saturday volunteers remove invasive exotic weeds from the slope above the north parking lot at TPF headquarters.

You’ll find our volunteers doing all manner of tasks. We appreciate every one of them and all of the time they contribute to our efforts. However, a few volunteers go above and beyond. Many congratulations and a big thank you to these 10 volunteers who contributed the most time – each logged more 100 hours – to the Foundation in 2014: Deb Hill, Alan Duke, Katherine Hashimoto, Kathleen Orth, Mike Sovich, Joe Grant, Tyler Crissman and Kathy Tardy.

To become a member of the TPF family of volunteers (and to begin your trek to the top 10 list), contact Andrew Chaves at andrew@theodorepayne.org. Opportunities are varied, from weeding to data entry to outreach, and your volunteer hours will be rewarded with free classes at the Foundation!

ARCHIVES, LIBRARY AND BULB COLLECTION  John Wickham

FIRST SATURDAY  Brandi Anderson, Edward Antonio, Carol Aronson, Mary Brooks, Lin Cher, Stephanie Chu, Snowdy Dodson, Alan Duke, Dee Farnsworth, Joe Grant, Tim Inglish, Jeff Jamison, Jon Joyce, Fanny Kilian, Mercy Lambert, Amy Litton, Cecily Miles, Chris Miles, Louise Olson, Tricia O’Connell, Cindy Park, Lucille Park, Heather Patton, Boris Price, Pyre, Allan R. Reyes, Jack Schooley, Duncan Sinclair, Margaret Steele, Allison Tokunaga, Katherine Varin

GROUNDS  Weina Dinata, Jay Schoenau

HOLLYWOOD Farmers’ MARKET  Carol Aronson, Richard Carlos, Mardi Caruso, Susanne Lambert, Steve Singer, Mitzi Zack Walters

L.A. ARBORETUM  Frances McAdam, Kathleen Orth, Duncan Sinclair, Richard Carlos

OFFICE/BOOKSTORE  Katherine Hashimoto, Mary Glazer, Deb Hill, Olga Palo, Barbara Quesada, Allan R. Reyes, Anji Simon, Margaret Steele

OUTREACH  Robert Basile

PROPOSITION  Carol Aronson, Mike Sovich

SALES YARD  Brandi Anderson, Ted Bruins, Alan Duke, Mary Glazer, Joe Grant, Rachel Knotz, Fredric Maupin, Kathleen Orth, Pyre

SEED ROOM  Petra Nichols, Kathy Tardy, Margaret Steele

TECH  Bryan Sibbrel, Spencer Sibbrel

THEODORE PAYNE ARTS COUNCIL  Miyoshi Barosh, Pamela Burgess, Andrew Chaves, Joan Harrison, Michael Miller, Ellen Steel, Kristina Newhouse, Allan Roman Reyes

The Theodore Payne Arts Council is a volunteer group. Membership is open to anyone interested in art, nature and the Foundation. Monthly meetings are usually held on the 3rd or 4th Sundays from 10:00am-noon. To learn more, please contact pamela@pamelaburgess.com.
Each month we feature a different species or cultivar and offer it at a 20% discount to members.

APRIL  *Arctostaphylos morroensis* ‘Hazard Canyon’ – Hazard Canyon Manzanita (Ericaceae)

This uncommon manzanita selection mounds slowly to 6’ tall and 10-12’ wide with evergreen foliage and peeling bronze bark. White to pale pink winter flowers provide food for hummingbirds. Prefers good drainage; full sun along the coast, afternoon shade inland; drought tolerant, once established. Deep slope-holding roots. Hardy to 15°F.

MAY  *Festuca occidentalis* – Western Fescue (Poaceae)

Add texture and movement to the garden with this pretty, narrow-leafed cool-season bunchgrass that thrives in lightly shaded spots. Plants grow rapidly to 3’ high by 2’ wide; spring seed heads attract butterflies and birds. Accepts most soils; moderate water; good erosion control. Recommended for slopes and under pines or redwoods; attractive container plant. Hardy to 15°F.

JUNE  *Artemisia californica* – California Sagebrush (Asteraceae)

This widespread native shrub lends its distinctive sweet scent to our local coastal sage scrub and chaparral plant communities. Loose, upright stems to 3-4’ high by 4’ wide sport small, silvery grey-green, very aromatic foliage and small yellowish summer flowers. Fast growing; accepts full sun or light shade and most soils; very drought-tolerant. Supports many bird and insect species. Excellent erosion control. Hardy to 15°F.