

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

CALIFORNIA HISTORY SECTION

RESEARCH GUIDES

WILDFLOWERS IN CALIFORNIA



[VISIT US](#)

*California History Section
900 N Street Room 200
9:30-4 Monday-Friday*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Do you plan your summer hikes by researching where the wildflowers are blooming? Have you ever bought a California native plant for your garden? Explore the vibrant natural history of California's native plants and wildflowers via the [California History Section's](#) rich collections!

Digitized Resources	3
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Reference Works:

General References	6
Wildflower Identifications	7
Wildflower Growth and Range	9
Wildflower Periodicals	11

Search:

Catalog General Research Tips	12
County-Specific Resources in our Catalog	13
On-site Research Resources	14
Pictorial On-site Resources	15
Other On-site Resources	17
Other Places to Look	19

ENJOY YOUR RESEARCH!

DIGITIZED RESOURCES

Can't come to the library just yet? No worries! There are a number of online resources you can explore related to wildflowers in California!



[History Section Display](#)

Our May-June 2017 book and image display focused on wildflowers in California. Check the display archive for our post-display booklet.



URL: <http://www.library.ca.gov/calhist/ca-display.html>



[Digitized Images](#)

We have scanned and digitized a small portion of our wildflower image collection and placed them in our online catalog. Check them out and remember that we have a lot more in the library.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-e-0&local_base=images

Type in Search Box: (Trees Shrubs plants) OR
(landscape desert*) OR (wildflower*) OR
(wild flower*) OR (Native plant*)

DIGITIZED RESOURCES



[Calscape](http://www.cnps.org/)

Want to plant a garden full of California Natives? This California Native Plant Society Database will help you determine what is native to your area.



URL: <http://www.cnps.org/>



[Consortium of California Herbaria](http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/consortium/)

Want to track down a plant specimen? Curious about a flower's geographic range? This database compiled by California's best herbariums list plant specimens and collection locations.



URL: <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/consortium/>



[CalFlora](http://calflora.org/)

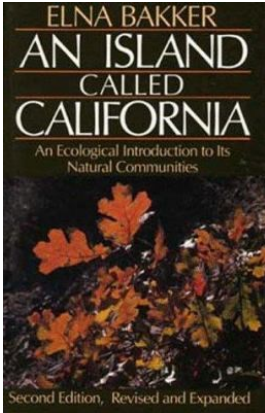
Want to contribute to native plant mapping next time you snap a picture on a hike? This crowdsourced database contains thousands of wildflower images useful for range information and even species identification.



URL: <http://calflora.org/>

GENERAL REFERENCES

Unsure about where to start? Consult a book! If you are interested in how native wildflowers fit into and contribute to California's environment, these items will help.

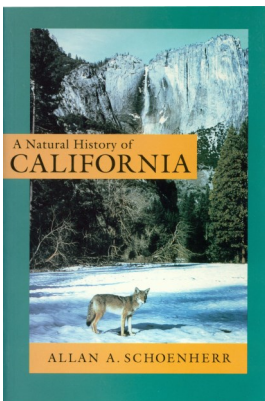


Bakker, E. (1984). [*An island called California : An ecological introduction to its natural communities*](#) (2nd ed., rev. and expanded.. ed.). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Want a general introduction to California's natural history? This book should do the trick! It not only covers native plants, but the animals present in each environmental region of California.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D000402913



Schoenherr, A. (1992). [*A natural history of California*](#) (California natural history guides ; 56). Berkeley: University of California Press.

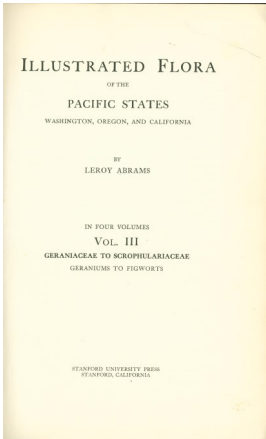
Are you a generalist at heart? For a comprehensive overview of how California's geography, native plants and animals fit together, this book is just the ticket.



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WILDFLOWER IDENTIFICATION

Have you found an odd looking blossom? Curious about what it is? These classic wildflower guides will help!

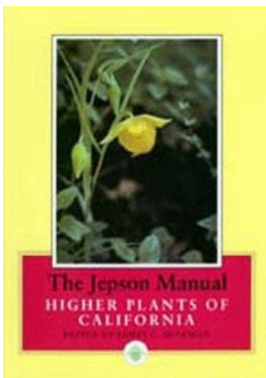


Abrams, L., & Ferris, R. (1923). [An illustrated flora of the Pacific States Washington, Oregon, and California.](#) Stanford University: Stanford University Press.

Some books withstand the test of time. This four volume illustrated guide to western plants is one of those. It organizes plants by family and lists their ranges.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D000203257



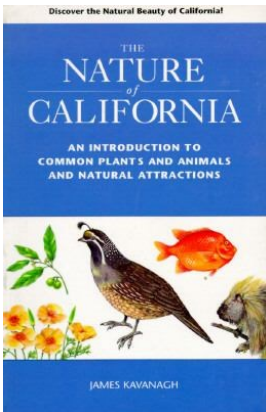
Jepson, W., & Hickman, J. (1993). [The Jepson manual : Higher plants of California.](#) Berkeley: University of California Press .

One of the gold standards for plant identification, this book lists detailed botanical information about native and introduced California plants by family. Updates to the manual are also available online at <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/jepman.html>



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D001019848

WILDFLOWER IDENTIFICATION



Kavanagh, J., & Leung, R. (1994). [The nature of California : An introduction to common plants and animals and natural attractions.](#) San Francisco, Calif.: Waterford Press.

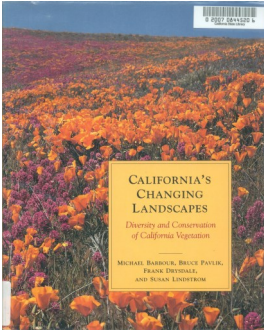
Written for laymen, this approachable little volume will help you easily identify the most common plants and animals you will encounter in California.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D000939372

WILDFLOWER GROWTH AND RANGE

Will the native plant you just saw at your local plant sale thrive in your garden? Where in California are there endangered plants? These books will answer those questions and more!

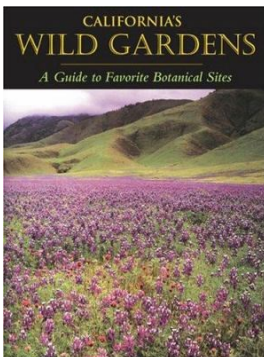


Barbour, M., & California Native Plant Society. (1993). [*California's changing landscapes : Diversity and conservation of California vegetation*](#). Sacramento, Calif.: California Native Plant Society.

Written for those who wonder about why native plants grow in the way that they do, this book describes the nature of California's geographic zones and the plants that make their home in each of them.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D001094068



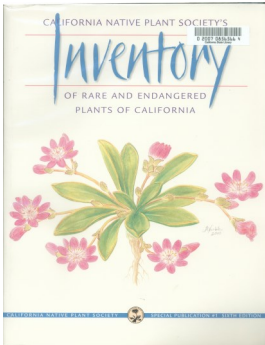
Faber, P., California Native Plant Society, & California. Dept. of Fish Game. (2005). [*California's wild gardens : A guide to favorite botanical sites*](#). Berkeley: University of California Press.

This gorgeous full-color book, with its descriptions of the plant life in various California places will encourage readers to get outside and experience the state in person.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D001247789

WILDFLOWER GROWTH AND RANGE



Tibor, D., & California Native Plant Society. (2001). [*Inventory of rare and endangered plants of California*](#) (6th ed., Special publication (California Native Plant Society) no. 1). Sacramento, CA: California Native Plant Society.

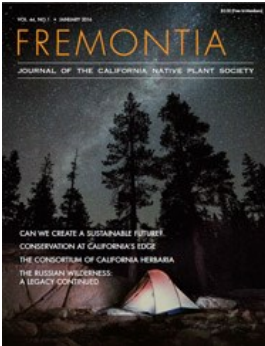
Many of California's native plants are now so rare they are in danger of disappearing altogether. This book lists these plants, their ranges and what threatens their existence.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D001151382

WILDFLOWER PERIODICALS

Want a fast read about a specific plant species or native plant rich locale? Our periodical collection might have what you're after! Here are some particularly promising native plant publications.

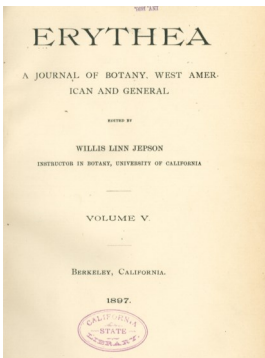


California Native Plant Society. (1973-). [Fremontia](#). Berkeley: California Native Plant Society.

Dating from the 1970's to the present, this magazine not only profiles individual plants in danger of extinction but also conservation efforts and the growth habits of specific plants.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D000150816



[Erythea](#). (1893-1898). Berkeley: University of California.

One of our earliest California native plant serials; articles in this magazine describe the ranges pollination methods etc. of individual plants and provide helpful hints on plant identification.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D000141728



Pacific Horticultural Foundation. (1940-). [Pacific Horticulture](#). San Francisco: Pacific Horticultural Foundation.

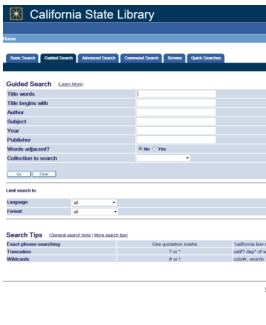
Dating back to the 1940's under various titles, while this journal covers far more than native plants, it does regularly carry articles on wildflowers and local plants.



URL: http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-c&ccl_term=SYS%3D000139073

CATALOG GENERAL RESEARCH TIPS

While many of our materials are online, even more are only in hard-copy. You can use the following resources to learn about our books, articles, and manuscripts on wildflowers.



The screenshot shows the California State Library Catalog search page. It features a 'Guided Search' section with fields for Title, Author, Subject, and Year. There are also checkboxes for 'Words adjacent?' and 'Collection to search'. Below this is a 'Search Tips' section with links for 'Exact phrase searching', 'Use quotation marks', 'California State Library', 'Database', 'Help', and 'Advanced Search'. The page is titled 'California State Library' and has a navigation bar with links like 'Home', 'About Us', 'Contact Us', and 'Help'.

Catalog

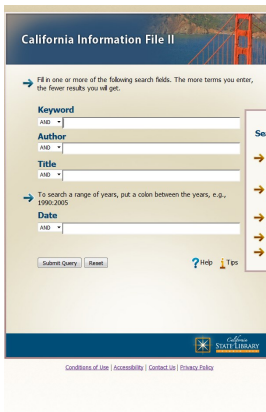
If you are looking for [images](#), [books](#) and [articles](#) on wildflowers, your best source is our [catalog](#).



URL: <http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/?func=find-a-0>

Type in Subject Box: (wildflower*) OR (wild flower*) OR (Native plant*)

Limit: By desired material type



The screenshot shows the California Information File II search page. It features a 'Keyword' section with fields for Author, Title, and Date. There are also checkboxes for 'AND' and 'OR' search options. Below this is a 'Search Tips' section with links for 'Exact phrase searching', 'Use quotation marks', 'California State Library', 'Database', 'Help', and 'Advanced Search'. The page is titled 'California Information File II' and has a navigation bar with links like 'Home', 'About Us', 'Contact Us', and 'Help'.

California Information File II

Sometimes the catalog doesn't provide as much detail as you might like. This is why we created the California Information File II. In this resource, you can find information about individual wildflower articles and more!



URL: http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryCalinfo.htm

Type in Subject Box: wildflower* OR wild flower* OR Native plant*

For a narrower search: Add a place to your keyword search

COUNTY-SPECIFIC RESOURCES IN OUR CATALOG

Curious about native plants and wildflowers in a specific county? While these catalog links don't list all of what the California History Section has, they are a good starting point.



ON-SITE RESEARCH RESOURCES

Our collection predates computers and so do some of our access points! If you are in the library, be sure to check the following analog files for leads on more resources.



California Information File

In the library? Check the California Information File before you do anything else! This file indexes over 130 years of California native plant articles, books, and manuscript collections.



Subject Headings:

1. Botany (various subdivisions)
2. Flowers (various subdivisions)
3. Plants (Various subdivisions)



Picture File

Sometimes a picture is worth a 1000 words, and not all of our pictures are online. To check the rest of the collection search our picture file.



Subject Headings:

1. Flowers (various subdivisions)
2. Plants (Various subdivisions)

PICTORIAL ON-SITE RESOURCES

We collect images of wildflowers! These largely unknown watercolor and photograph collections document and celebrate the richness of California's native plants.



Ethel Bailey-Higgins Collection

This primarily Southern California photographic collection from the turn of the century lists the name of the plant depicted and as well as where the artist found it.



To Access: Consult with librarians.



Cornelia Cunningham Collection

One of our larger single collections, Cornelia Cunningham depicted over 200 California plants in watercolor at the turn of the last century.



To Access: Consult with librarians.



Lena Scott Harris Collection

These colored photographs contain a mix of native and non-native plants dating from the turn of the last century.



To Access: Consult with librarians.

PICTORIAL ON-SITE RESOURCES



Louise Hutchinson Collection

Created by another watercolorist, this collection of mostly Humboldt region plants, is especially useful because it lists general location information for each of the depicted specimens.



To Access: Consult with librarians.



A. C. Pillsbury Collection

This collection contains about 100 colored photos of wildflowers in Yosemite complete with the date Pillsbury took the picture and the flower's name.



To Access: Consult with librarians.



Albert Valentien Collection

A painter who worked for Rockwood pottery, these paintings done at the turn of the century exhibit his talent as well as the beauty of California's wildflowers.



To Access: Consult with librarians.

OTHER ON-SITE RESOURCES

Despite our best efforts, some of our resources defy complete description. We suggest that you ask a librarian about any wildflower or native plant information contained in the following files



Vertical Files

Our massive collection of vertical files covers a wide variety of topics including native plants. You can check them for information on organizations that protect wildflowers and sites famous for them.



Subject Headings: Check with librarians.



Postcard Files

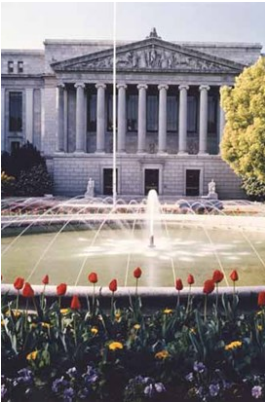
Separate from our photo collection, our postcard collection contains a number of wildflower images. Most are not online.



Subject Headings: Check with librarians

OTHER PLACES TO LOOK

Of course the California History Section doesn't have everything, so we suggest that in addition to looking at our collections, you contact the following organizations



Other California State Library Sections

[Government Publications Section](#)

[Witkin Law Library](#)

[Sutro Library](#)

[General Information](#)



- <http://www.library.ca.gov/gps/index.html>
- http://www.library.ca.gov/collections/law_coll.html
- http://www.library.ca.gov/about/sutro_main.html
- http://www.library.ca.gov/collections/general_coll.html



Government Agencies

[California State Archives](#)

[Baldwin Hills Conservancy](#)

[California Biodiversity Council](#)

[California Department of Fish and
Wildlife](#)

[California State Parks](#)

[San Diego River Conservancy](#)



- <http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/>
- <http://www.bhc.ca.gov/>
- <http://ucanr.edu/sites/CBC/>
- <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/>
- <https://www.parks.ca.gov/>
- <http://sdrc.ca.gov/>

OTHER PLACES TO LOOK



More Government Agencies

[Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy](#)

[Sierra Nevada Conservancy](#)

[University of California. Division of
Agriculture and Natural Resources](#)

Local California libraries or archives



- [http://www.smmc.ca.gov/
index.html](http://www.smmc.ca.gov/index.html)
- [http://
www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/
/](http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/)
- <http://ucanr.edu/>



Non-Profits and clubs

[California Horticultural Society](#)

[California Native Plant Society](#)

[California Native Grasslands](#)



- [http://www.calhortsociety.org/
index.html](http://www.calhortsociety.org/index.html)
- <http://www.cnps.org/>
- <https://cnga.wildapricot.org/>



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900 N Street Room 200
Sacramento CA 95814

Phone: (916) 654-0176
E-mail: cslcal@library.ca.gov
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