DESERT WILDFLOWERS

Each winter many wait in anticipation of what Mother Nature has in store for spring in the desert. If plentiful winter and spring rains are followed by warm days, the desert will be awash in every color of the rainbow.

Thousands of people will flock to the desert to witness the transformation from browns and grays to every hue that can be imagined. Hoping to be first in line to see the brilliant yet short lived show. Those that dally will have to wait at least a year, maybe more for the show to return and awe us once more. Good luck on your quest and may this cycle never stop

The **Desert Five-Spot** is one of the most beautiful flowers that grows in the desert. This

annual herb, a member of the Mallow Family (Malvaceae), grows 4 to 24 inches high. Its sparse leaves are round to heart-shaped, with scalloped margins up to 2 inches wide. The color of the leaves is green and often red with short, bristly hairs. When light passes through the delicate petals of the flower, the globe resembles a glowing lantern. For this reason, the Desert Five-Spot is also known as the Lantern Flower and Chinese Lantern.

Desert Primrose (*Onagraceae*) are a

bushlike, sweet-scented annual is most often a grayish green, creeping dune plant growing 2 to 18 inches high and spreading as wide as 40 inches. Sparse, pale green, hairy leaves grow as long as 4 inches, mostly on the ends of stalks emerging from a dense basal rosette. The long, oval leaves are often lobed, toothed, grooved or cleft. Blooms are, white, 4-petaled flowers forming a saucer, turn yellow toward the center. They bloom 1-1/2 to 3 inches wide. Flowers open in the early evening and close in mid-morning.

Beavertail Cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*) are succulents growing up to two 2 feet tall 4 feet spread green or slightly purplish segments 3.2 to 5.6 inches long 1.6 to 4 inches wide slightly pleated during the dry season. The Beaver-tail Cactus is a smaller prickly pear cactus, and it will often start blooming when it has only two pads.

Mojave Indigo Bush (*Psorothamnus)* are shrubs. They are generally thorny, thickly branched, strong scented bushes. The species bear bright purple legume flowers and gland-rich pods.

Desert Chicory (*Rafinesquia neomexicana)* Grows up to 20 inches tall;showy white flowers with pink violet stripes on the underside of petal. Often seen growing up through the branches of other shrubs and using them as nurse plants for support. Prefers gravelly and sandy desert soils common in creosote bush scrub and joshua tree woodland.

MoJave Aster Many purple-to-lavender narrow rays surround yellow disks with the overall flowerhead growing up to 2 inches in diameter. This member of the Sunflower Family (Asteraceae) is a shrubby perennial growing up to 30 inches high. It contains many long, gray-green stems with hairy, 3-inch leaves growing from the base. The stems tend to remain leafless near the top. Each plant may bear as many as 20 flowers.

Desert Dandelion *(Malacothrix californica)* Bright yellow flowers on branched stems bloom March through June. A single plant can have many flower heads, which are 1 to 1-1/2 inches wide. This member of the Sunflower Family grows 6 to 14 inches high with 3- to 5-inch leaves. Fruit is seed-like and topped with soft bristles. In springs following wet winters, this bright wildflower will form broad, brilliant patches of gold across the sandy desert floor.

Desert-Mallow (Sphaeralcea ambigua) is a perennial with woody lower stems that grows to three feet tall. It is conspicuous when in bloom in the spring as these plants may be covered with peach-red blossoms that may be up to one and one-half inches in diameter.

Desert Paintbrush (Schrophulariaceae) the most common of the dry paintbrushes, is but one of a large, easily recognizable genus of early bloomers. Numerous erect stems with bright, red-to-orange blossoms. It grows 4 to 16 inches high and has leaves that are 1 to 2 inches long, the upper being divided into as many as 5 narrow lobes.

Phacelia is an annual shrub of the Waterleaf Family (Hydrophyllaceae). It often grows up through other shrubs to a height of from one to 3 feet. Green, finely-haired, fern-like leaves and the coiled, scorpion tail arrangement of the flowers are characteristic of this species. This species is know by another of other common names, including Wild Heliotrope and Scorpionweed.

MOJAVE DESERT WILDFLOWERS

Desert Marigold

A Flower picked is a hundred lost. A photo last for years, A memory forever.

Needles Field Office
1303 South U.S. Hwy 95
Needles, CA 92363

Phone: (760)326-7000
Fax: (760)326-7099
www.blm.gov/ca/needles

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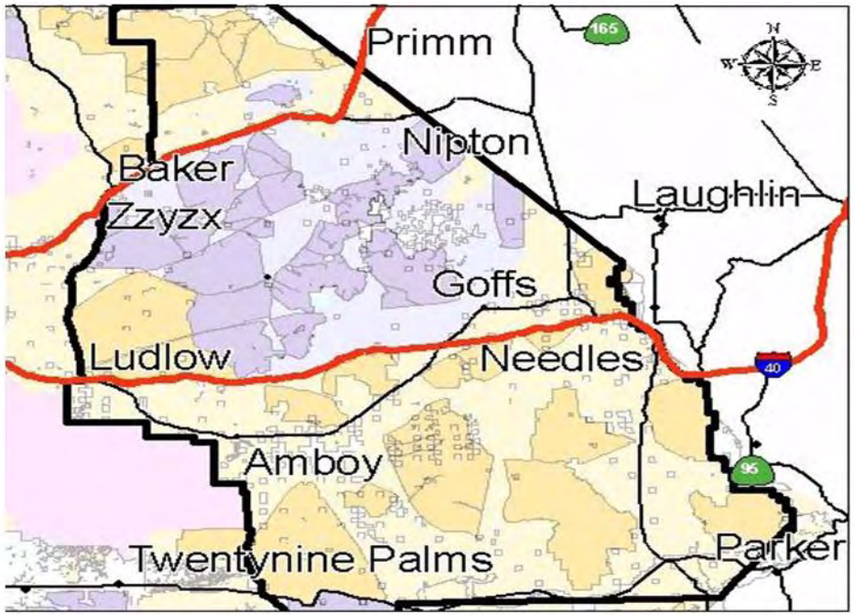

OHV Use

Off-highway vehicles (OHVs) provide fun, entertainment, and discovery. However, many of the desert's most attractive and fragile resources can be destroyed if vehicle access is not properly controlled. Resources, cultural and natural, can be unintentionally damaged or destroyed by uncontrolled vehicle use. We all have the responsibility for the proper use of vehicles, so please remember to TREAD LIGHTLY on public and private lands. Stay on designated routes of travel only.

NO CROSS COUNTRY TRAVEL

BLM/CA/GI-2009-020+8300

Please Be Advised

Military explosives can be found most anywhere in the desert. Large areas of the desert were and still are used for bombing ranges and maneuvers by the U.S. Armed Forces. There may be unexploded devices that can cause serious bodily injury or death if handled. Report any such devices to the Federal Interagency Communications Center toll free at (888) 233-6518 or call 911.

The Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center borders the western edge of the Needles Field Office Area of responsibility. This is a live bombing range. DO NOT enter the bombing range!

Desert Safety

- Summer temperatures routinely exceed 110° Fahrenheit. Each year people are lost, injured, and sometimes die while visiting desert areas. Take precautions to prevent finding yourself in an emergency situation.

- Always tell someone your plans, or leave a visible note on the dash of your vehicle with your expected route, destination, and time of return. Stick to your itinerary.

- Carry plenty of water. Drink at least a gallon per day.

- Take food or snacks. In the heat, you may not feel hungry, but your body needs nourishment.

- Never go alone.

- Take a good map and compass.

- Carry a first aid kit, signal mirror, flashlight and matches.

- Take a CB radio or cellular phone.

- Wear sunscreen and sunglasses.

- Dress in light colored, loose fitting clothes. Long-sleeves, long pants, a hat, and sturdy shoes will help protect you from the sun, coarse volcanic material, and sharp, spiny vegetation.

- Bring a jacket with you, as evening temperatures may drop 30 degrees or more.

- Make sure your vehicle is in good working condition. Check your tires, spare tire, jack, lug wrench, and fluid levels. Always start with a full tank of gas and try not to let it fall below half a tank before filling up again.

- If you are stranded, stay with your vehicle. Don't panic. Your vehicle is easier to spot than a person walking. Lift your hood. Attempt to signal for help using a mirror or by using newspapers to make an X on the ground.

- Watch for snakes, spiders, and scorpions among the rocks.

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In Case of Emergencies Contact the Federal Interagency Communications Center (FICC) at (888)233-6518 or call 9-1-1.