



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WILD Flowers

A Dramatic Spring and Summer Bloom of Weird and Wild Flowers Coming to San Francisco Botanical Garden in the Aftermath of Winter's Rain

April 1 — August 31, 2016

SAN FRANCISCO – After four dry years, this winter has brought much needed rain to California, and some very *WILD* flowers are getting ready to put on a particularly vibrant show this spring and summer at San Francisco Botanical Garden (SFBG). A spectacular variety of protea will bristle with huge, fiery flowers in the South African Garden. The magic dogwood is set to dazzle with its spiraling, white flowers that perch on its limbs like exotic lanterns. The monkey's hand tree will explode with what seems like hundreds of small, open hands extending from its crimson flowers. The season will also bring vivid and *WILD* profusions of flowers in the Garden of California Native Plants, the Mediterranean Garden, and the Zellerbach Garden of Perennials.

The Garden is a unique home to a huge variety of remarkable and rare plants, including (many) no longer found in their native habitats. Fantastical flora from the farthest reaches of the globe can be found in 55 acres of geographically specific gardens from South Africa to Chile. Many of the more than 8,000 kinds of plants in the Garden's collections are native to mediterranean habitats worldwide, flowering brilliantly after a wet winter soaks ground parched during the rainless summer. Starting in April and extending through August, the largest portion of the Garden's collections comes into bloom, drawing a huge host of pollinators to its bounty of remarkable and rare plants. Hummingbirds, butterflies and bees will put on a spectacular show, lured by the abundance of flowers and the food they offer.

It's an ever-changing mosaic of surprises as visitors stroll from one region to another, taking in the beauty of these naturalistically planted environments and the unusual and stunning plants within them.

Blooming events occur frequently at this time—some can last for weeks while some may last for just a week or less. Visitors can get the latest on current, must-see flowerings by following the Garden on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter for regular photo updates. Free season-specific plant maps, docent-led tours, special signage, and more, as well as unique classes and activities for families and adults, also offer an array of ways to appreciate and learn about the *WILD* flora (and fauna) at the Garden.

Some of the not-to-be-missed *WILD* Flowers include:

SPRING (April – May)

Arthur L. Menzies Garden of California Native Plants: A vibrant seasonal show takes place right in the heart of the city every year as the four-acre Garden of California Native Plants blazes into bloom. With over 700 species on view, the Garden's native wildflower meadow and surrounding arroyos and woodlands come to colorful life with bright blue wild lilac, gleaming golden poppies, delicate white and yellow meadowfoam, purple irises, and more.

***Puya chilensis*:** A high elevation bromeliad native to the arid hillsides of Chile, this surprising pineapple relative sends up massive 10-foot tall flower stalks that resemble medieval maces. Its huge stature and bright chartreuse flowers makes it one of the highlights of the spring bloom.

Cornus florida* var. *urbiniana (magic dogwood): Hailing from the mountains of Eastern Mexico, the flowers are dramatically distinct from other dogwoods. The thin, white bracts are fused at the top, giving them a lantern-like appearance. When in bloom, the tree can be covered in hundreds of white flowers, resulting in a spectacular display of spirals and shapes.

***Banksia speciosa*:** Commonly known as the showy banksia, this native of the southern coast of Western Australia lives up to its name with attractive cone-like flower heads up to 5 inches tall and 4 inches wide and dramatic, saw-toothed leaves. The mature seed pods are quite unique and showy, as well.

Protea cynaroides (king protea): The national flower of South Africa has the widest range and the largest flower heads of all *Protea* species. The massive, bowl-shaped inflorescences can reach up to 12 inches in diameter and are a favorite for flower arrangements as one flowerhead is almost an arrangement in and of itself.

SUMMER (June – August)

Mediterranean Garden: A hill of ivy near the Garden's Great Meadow sat undisturbed for at least 25 years. Named Heidelberg Hill for the 1894 Midwinter Fair, where it was the site of a German village and beer garden, this area has been recently transformed into

a stunning new mediterranean garden. Scarlet field poppies bloom *en masse* at the foot of the hill, and as visitors climb the paths upwards, they can take in a diverse array of blooming salvias, rockroses, lavenders, snapdragons, and more.

Jennie B. Zellerbach Garden of Perennials: This dramatic horseshoe-shaped Garden was designed strictly for its aesthetic appeal and is at its best in summer with a profuse array of flowering perennials including queen of the prairie, masterwort, and more. *Clematis* and other flowering vines trail over three lovely arbors.

Chiranthodendron pentadactylon (monkey's hand tree): Ranging from Mexico to Guatemala, this evergreen tree, sacred to the Aztecs, features gorgeous red flowers with protruding claw-like stamens that have an unusual similarity to a monkey's hand.

***Eucomis* spp.** (pineapple lilies): With its thick central stalk, tightly packed with small, six-petal, star-like flowers and its topknot of bracts, this lovely South African plant looks very much like a pineapple. The flowers of most species are greenish-white, sometimes marked with maroon or purple. Cultivars can don red, burgundy, and violet-colored leaves and flowers.

Romneya coulteri (matilija poppy): A beautiful member of the poppy family, this tall shrub, sometimes also called the California tree poppy, has grey-green leaves and large, fragrant, crepe-papery white flowers that have a striking resemblance to a fried egg. This is the largest and showiest of California's native wildflowers.

RELATED PROGRAMMING

The Garden offers free *WILD* Flower-focused docent tours that take place every Saturday, April 2 to August 27, at 2 PM in addition to its year-round, general tours at 1:30 PM. Visitors of all ages can also ask questions and explore plants in more depth at Garden Interpretation Stations on Saturdays and Sundays, April 2 to August 28, from 1:30-3:30 PM. In addition, visitors can make use of a free smart phone app to explore the collections.

Visitors can also find a wealth of resources on plants from around the world in the Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture, Northern California's most comprehensive horticultural library. Free bibliographies for children and adults will be available on a variety of themes including wild, weird and wonderful plants, California natives, and other mediterranean habitat flora.

Two special art exhibitions occur at this time in the Library. Through April 30, visitors can see and purchase works from *Chasing Color: Painting California's Native Flora through the Seasons*, by Santa Cruz-based artist Erika Perloff. Perloff paints vividly with pastels in the plein air tradition, highlighting the beauty of California native flora.

Chasing Color tracks the seasons from spring and summer wildflower displays in desert and mountains, to fall leaf changes, to winter conifers covered in snow. From May to August, the Library will exhibit *Reflections: The Art and Photography of Margo Bors*, a retrospective show covering work from the last 25 years including watercolors, linocuts, and photography and also new work. Bors' passion for the flora and fauna of San Francisco is seen in her stunning artwork, which often features the close relationship between native plants and pollinators. A member of California Native Plant Society, Bors has exhibited work several times in the library, most recently in 2008 with *Plants and Creatures Small*.

The Garden's Annual Spring Plant Sale taking place Saturday, May 7 from 10 AM-2 PM is the Bay Area's largest plant sale with over 20,000 plants representing 2,500 different varieties and features a number of the *WILD* flowers grown at the Garden. The Annual Spring Plant Sale is an important fundraiser and is the largest of the Garden's monthly plant sales that take place on select Saturdays. Admission to the sale is free. Become a Garden member and enjoy first pick at the Member Preview Sale on Friday, May 1 from 5-8PM.

In the Bookstore, visitors enjoy special discounts on many seasonal items including wildflower books, greeting cards, posters, and more.

In addition, the Garden offers these special programs for adults and families:

Bean Sprouts Family Days

Saturdays, April 2 – October 29; 1-4 PM

FREE with regular admission

Journey out to the Children's Garden at the west end of the Garden to enjoy hands-on outdoor fun! Create colorful crafts with flowers, help weed and water the garden, read a book or play a nature game with our staff and teen interns. Special activities celebrating Arbor Day will occur on April 30. Suitable for families with children ages 3-10. Drop in at any time during the program; heavy rain cancels.

Full Moon Walk – Earth Day

Friday, April 22; 7-9 PM

\$25 general

Celebrate Earth Day with a tour of the Garden after dark, admiring the glow of the flowers and foliage that come alive at night. Light refreshments included. Bring a flashlight. Walk occurs if sky is foggy or clear, but heavy rain cancels.

Children's Story Time in the Library

First and third Sundays, April through August; 10:30-11:30 AM
FREE (admission required for docent walks following story readings)

Come celebrate weird and wild plants, spring, pollination, and redwood trees in the Garden! Enjoy a special story in the library on a different theme each month at 10:30 AM (see below), then take a guided walk through the Garden that connects that morning's story to living plants. For families with children ages 4-8.

April 3, 17: Golden State Plants
May 1, 15: Weird & Wild Plants
June 5, 19: UnBEElievable Plant Pollinators & Beneficial Garden Bugs
July 3, 17: Grow Giants: Impressive Garden Harvests
August 7, 21: Keeping it Wild: Plant & Animal Habitats

Pastels in the Garden with Erika Perloff

Saturday, April 23; 9 AM-3 PM
\$100 general, includes \$20 materials fee

Learn to paint flowers both wild and tame in the landscape. Using soft pastels, the class will focus on capturing impressions of flowers and trees in outdoor scenes. Students will create these landscapes using a combination of direct observation, sketching in the gardens (weather permitting), and personal photos, experimenting with a variety of soft pastel techniques and discovering how to control pastels and use them expressively. Each person will end the day with a small pastel landscape and many sketches from which to work.

Some drawing experience helpful but not required. \$20 materials fee includes some essentials – an additional recommended materials list will be provided.

Walk on the *WILD* Flower Side – Spring's Best

Saturdays, April 23 & May 21; 10 AM-12 PM
\$20 general

View the best of the season's blooms on a guided tour by Garden curatorial staff. Each tour will be different – a "curator's choice" of the Garden's wildest and most wonderful blooms. Heavy rain cancels.

***WILD* Flowers: Pencil Drawing with Nina Antze**

Thursday, May 19; 10 AM-3 PM
\$90 general

Discover the *WILD* Flowers of the Botanical Garden through botanical illustration with Nina Antze. Learn and practice colored-pencil techniques with a selection of California and Mediterranean wildflowers, and some surprise beauties from the Garden's unique collection. Live blooms from the Garden will be provided or you may bring your own

favorites. If weather permits, class will lunch outside and experience nature first hand. All drawing levels welcome. A supply list will be provided. Bring a lunch.

Full Moon Walk – Blue Moon

Saturday, May 21; 7-9 PM

\$25 general

Celebrate the Blue Moon, also called the “Full Flower Moon,” during a tour of the Garden after dark, admiring the glow of the flowers and foliage of spring! Light refreshments included. Bring a flashlight. Walk occurs if sky is foggy or clear, but heavy rain cancels.

Garden Landscape Photography – Workshop with Saxon Holt

Saturday, June 11; 7:30 AM – 12:30 PM

\$130 general

This workshop will focus on the Garden’s summer scenery and Saxon Holt’s e-book series - The PhotoBotanic Garden Photography Workshop, Book Two: *Think Like A Camera*. Learn to see the landscape with your camera and use it as a tool for composition. Preregistered students will receive a download link for a copy of the e-book to read before the workshop in order to take full advantage of this hands-on, working photo shoot. Class is suitable for all levels of photographers but students should have a tripod and computer to download images.

Full Moon Walk – Summer Solstice

Monday, June 20; 7:30-9:30 PM

\$25 general

Celebrate the summer solstice by moonlight during an evening tour of the Garden. Enjoy the sights and scents of the nocturnal Garden and light refreshments. Bring a flashlight. Walk occurs if sky is foggy or clear, but heavy rain cancels.

Walk on the *WILD* Flower Side – Summer Sensations

Saturday, June 18, July 23 & August 27; 10 AM-12 PM

\$20 general

View the best of the season’s blooms on a guided tour by Garden curatorial staff. Each tour will be different – a “curator’s choice” of the Garden’s wildest and most wonderful blooms. Heavy rain cancels.

Full Moon Walk – Flower Piano Farewell

Monday, July 18; 7-9:30 PM

\$35 general

Send off the pianos with an evening tour of the Garden, performance, and refreshments in honor of the conclusion of Flower Piano, SFBG’s popular summer event featuring 12

pianos for performance and play throughout the Garden. Join us for this rare and wonderful outdoor art adventure. Bring a flashlight. Walk occurs if sky is foggy or clear, but heavy rain cancels.

Full Moon Walk – Summer’s End

Thursday, August 18; 7:30-9:30 PM

\$25 general

Enjoy the sights and scents of the nocturnal Garden and light refreshments during this last full moon of the summer. Bring a flashlight. Walk occurs if sky is foggy or clear, but heavy rain cancels.

San Francisco Botanical Garden, located in Golden Gate Park with entrances on 9th Ave at Lincoln Way and on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive off the Music Concourse, is open 365 days a year at 7:30 AM. Last entry changes with the seasons as follows: 6 PM 2nd Sunday in March – September; 5 PM October – early November; 4 PM 1st Sunday in November – January; 5 PM February – early March. Admission for San Francisco residents (with proof of residence, e.g., CA ID with SF address, or photo ID and utility bill) is FREE. Admission for non-residents is \$8 general, \$6 youth 12-17 and seniors; \$2 children 5-11; children 4 and under FREE. Families of 2 adults and one or more child pay just \$17. Admission is FREE to all visitors from 7:30 to 9 AM. SFBG members receive free admission and discounts on fee-based programs. The public should call (415) 661-1316 or visit www.sfbotanicalgarden.org for more information.

About San Francisco Botanical Garden

San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum is a living museum within Golden Gate Park, offering 55 acres of beautiful gardens displaying over 8,000 different kinds of plants from around the world. Highlights include the California Native Garden and the century old Redwood Grove; the unique Mesoamerican, Andean, and Southeast Asian Cloud Forest collections; and the magnificent Magnolia collection, the most significant for conservation purposes outside China.

Established in 1940 originally as Strybing Arboretum, San Francisco Botanical Garden is a partnership of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department and the non-profit San Francisco Botanical Garden Society.

Media sponsors for San Francisco Botanical Garden’s 75th Anniversary include KQED Public Broadcasting and San Francisco Magazine.

