

# FIELD OBSERVATION REPORT

By Mary Wilson

April 11, 2018

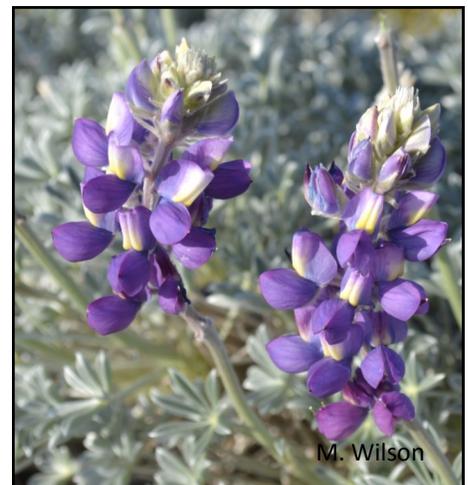
## Poppy Reserve

There are poppies at the reserve but not like last year. You can spot them along the trails and they are now starting to bloom among the goldfields. Other plants to look for are: fiddleneck, filaree, forget-me-nots, milkvetch, blue dick, grape soda lupine, combs bur, fringe pod, wild cucumber, lacy phacelia and the beaver-tail cactus has flower buds and will be blooming soon.

Do look for birds as several have been spotted, including: horned larks, loggerhead shrikes, turkey vultures, house finches, ravens, red-tailed hawks, roadrunner, and white-crowned sparrows.



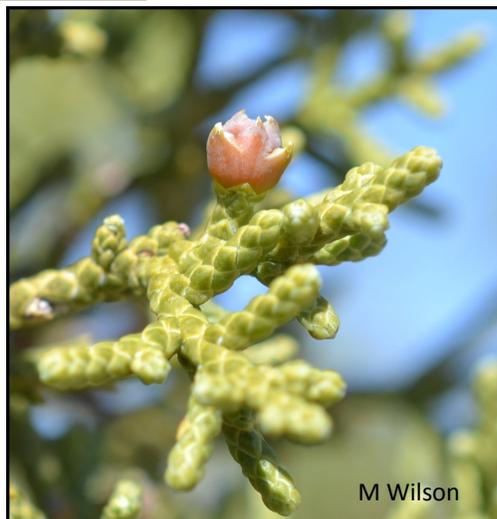
Goldfields are starting to make a showing in valleys and hillsides.

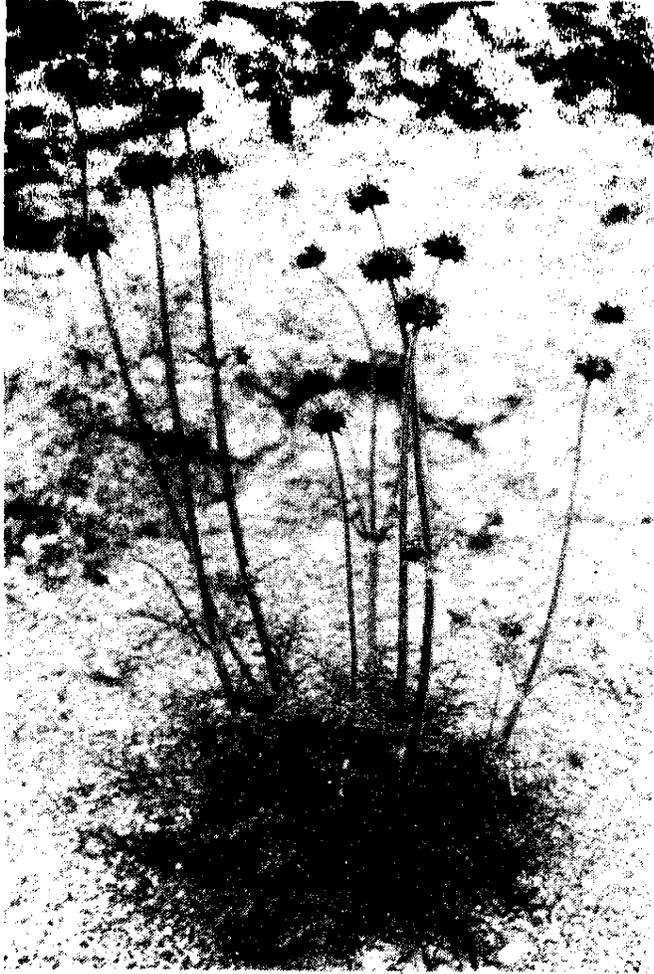


Grape soda lupine are in bloom. If you smell the flowers during the warmth of the day they do smell like grape soda. Before you take a sniff of the flowers take a quick look as the bees also like this plant.

## Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland

The photos below were taken between February 28 and April 2, 2018. They show the growth of the Female Juniper cones (berries).





## Wildflowers

# Masses of chia over foothills

By MILT STARK

Chia

Salvia Columbariæ

Mint Family

Masses of these flowers can be seen throughout the foothills between March and May. Some very good groups are now visible on Godde Pass Road and on Elizabeth Lake Road about two miles west of 25th Street West. At a distance they appear to be purple, but upon close examination, they are found to be tiny blue flowers growing from curious, purplish, button-like heads which are pierced by a square purple stem.

From six inches to three feet tall, these plants have from two to four heads when mature. Very rough shaped, dull green leaves are found at the base of the plant. Long after the blooming season, these dried stalks and heads are left standing, waiting for the wind to scatter the seeds.

For centuries, chia was of great economic importance to the Southwest and Mexican Indians who harvested the seed by either knocking the heads into a woven basket or by bundling the plants when the seeds were ripening and later threshing and winnowing the bundles similar to wheat.

The seeds were roasted and ground into a fine flour. This was eaten dry in pinches, diluted to make a drink or made into a kind of gruel. It was used as a water freshener in alkaline water holes. Two or three seeds placed under the eyelid supposedly cured eye inflammation.

Chia was used extensively by early settlers. In 1894, chia ~~even~~ sold in Los Angeles stores for six to eight dollars a pound, and even today may be found in health food stores. It is very easy to digest and reportedly is very nutritious in that one teaspoonful was purported to be sufficient to sustain an Indian on a 24-hour forced march



Chia

## BURROWING OWLS

The female lays a clutch of 5-7 eggs and incubates them for 28-30 days. The eggs are round, smooth, white and about 1.25 inches long. The female does all the incubation and brooding and is believed to stay entirely in the burrow at this time. The males bring food to the female during the incubation period. He also brings food for the chicks and mother during the early nesting stages. Most eggs hatch, however, only 4-5 chicks survive to leave the nest.



Owlets open their eyes on the 5<sup>th</sup> day, stand and emerge from the burrow around the 12<sup>th</sup> day

