

FIELD OBSERVATION REPORT

By Mary Wilson

June 17, 2018

Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve

This years poppy season is over. You might find a poppy plant now and then but the flowers are small and more yellow than orange. The Desert straw is starting to bloom and the Jimson weed still have their white trumpet flowers and are starting to form their seed pods.



Desert straw



Jimson weed

Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland

The male cones have dispersed their pollen and the female trees have the green berries that are about 2 cm in diameter. The photo to the right is of a male Juniper that was covered in male cones this year but I noticed about six berries among the male cones. The Juniper trees will change sex and one study found that 2 to 3% of Junipers will change sex every year.



The following article was written by Milt Stark. Unfortunately there is no name or date of the newspaper but was probably either the Ledger Gazette or the Antelope Valley Press. Milt had his own style of writing and I hope you enjoy the article as much as I did.

Valley wildflowers

There's 'lettuce' in foothills



By MILT STARK

Miner's Lettuce

(also known as Indian Lettuce and Spanish Lettuce)
Claytonia perfoliata (Listed by most botanists
as *montia perfoliata*)

Purslane Family

A visit to any of the chaparral covered foothills surrounding Antelope Valley should produce great quantities of Miner's Lettuce. Look for them in moist places under the various shrubs. Specifically the hills above Bouquet Canyon from Lincoln summit to the Dam base a healthy crop of this bush, four to 12-inches high, annual herb. The $\frac{3}{4}$ to three inch, saucer-like leaf gives the appearance of being pierced by the stem ending in a flower cluster. The plants in the adjoining picture have rather immature flowers. As the season progresses the flower will grow out from the leaf as much as three or four inches.

The common names were given because of use the Indians, Spanish and miners made of the rather interesting plant. For the 49ers, the lettuce furnished much needed greens to supplement their diet of dried and salted rations and served to prevent scurvy. It was cooked like spinach and a really tasty dish was prepared of "greens and bacon." It can be eaten raw in salads with vinegar and salt or steamed lightly with butter or lemon juice. It is highly recommended when mixed with other wild greens such as watercress, dandelion and chickweed.



Miner's Lettuce

JUNE 13, 2017

A DRIVE ON MUNZ RANCH ROAD



Sometimes when driving we miss some amazing flowers by just driving on. I got out of the car and found California buckwheat, deer weed, elderberry, linear-leaf goldengbush, jimson weed, mustard, a poppy and prickly poppy all in bloom.

Driving on I came across coyote melon, mesa phlox, mustard and chicory.



deer weed



prickly poppy



coyote melon



mesa phlox



mustard



chicory



mustard-like primrose



◀ Lake Elizabeth—without water.

All photos by M. Wilson

BURROWING OWLS

By Mary Wilson

After the eggs hatch, the female will brood them for 1-2 weeks while the male continues to bring food to the nest. Young owls begin appearing at the burrow's entrance two weeks after hatching.



If the nest gets overcrowded, the older owlets will stand outside near the entrance. There will be an adult close by for supervision and protection.



When hatched the chicks will have all down feathers but they will soon start forming the true feathers on their wings after leaving the nest. These owlets will take naps outside the nest along with learning to preen themselves. They also know how to make a calling sound to let the parents know they are hungry.