



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 26, 2018

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Celebrating Nevada's bounty of native wildflowers

A field of wildflowers is one of the most inspiring scenes you can experience in nature, and springtime in Nevada offers an abundance of opportunities to enjoy these blossoming treasures. In commemoration of National Wildflower Week, May 1-7, the [Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources](#) is helping to promote the importance of Nevada's native wildflowers, and their vital role in supporting the State's natural environment.

Nevada is home to more than 1,500 native wildflower species statewide. And that's only counting the herbaceous (non-woody) species; there are hundreds more flowering shrubs, trees, and vines in the State. Beyond their aesthetic beauty, these native blooms help conserve water, provide habitat for birds, butterflies, and other wildlife, and protect soil from erosion. In addition to being more resistant to local diseases and pests, native wildflowers require less fertilizer than other plants, and usually only need to be mowed once per season. Because wildflower gardens require minimal maintenance compared to traditional gardens, more and more consumers have been drawn to the idea as a way to save time, money, and water.

Beyond serving as an alternative to non-native plants, Nevada's wildflowers also attract "pollinators," such as bees, butterflies, and hawk moths, which are essential to the health of our natural environment. Additionally, more than a third of the world's food crops are dependent on pollinators to produce fruit. Unfortunately, several pollinator species in Nevada have undergone severe declines in recent years. The [Nevada Natural Heritage Program](#), in partnership with other state, federal, and local agencies, continues to aid in protecting, conserving, and enhancing pollinator habitats in Nevada to help foster vibrant ecosystems statewide.

You can help protect and preserve Nevada's wildflowers, too! The Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources shares the following tips to help our State's wild blossoms thrive:

1. Plant native wildflowers in your yard or garden, and/or replace your lawn with native flora. The Nevada Division of Forestry operates two nurseries, located in Washoe County and Las Vegas, which offer native and adapted plants for purchase year round. To learn more, visit <http://forestry.nv.gov/ndf-state-forest-nurseries/>
2. Photograph wildflowers and upload your photos to the iNaturalist App, available on Android and iPhone devices, to help identify the locations and species of plants and animals in your area. By recording and sharing your observations, you'll create research quality data for area scientists working to better understand and protect nature.

3. Visit the Nevada Natural Heritage Program's booth at Pollinator Day. The event will be held at the University of Nevada, Reno on May 5, 2018, from 10am-4pm. Staff will be distributing native wildflower seeds and helpful information. To learn more, visit <https://www.unr.edu/nevada-today/news/2018/day-at-the-museum>
4. Participate in a "Wildflower Walk," hosted periodically by the Nevada Natural Heritage Program and the Nevada Division of State Parks, to learn more about local wildflowers and conservation efforts. The next Wildflower Walk will be held at the Galena Creek Visitor's Center on May 20th starting at 2:00 pm. For more information, call (775) 684-2900.

Please share your wildflower photos on social media using #NationalWildflowerWeek, and tag the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (@NevDCNR) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and/or [Instagram](#).

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The **Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**' mission is to protect, manage, and enhance Nevada's natural and cultural resources. Established in 1957, the Department includes ten divisions and programs (Environmental Protection, Forestry, State Parks, State Lands, Water Resources, Historic Preservation, Conservation Districts, Natural Heritage, Sagebrush Ecosystem, and Off-Highway Vehicles) and 11 boards and commissions.