



Desert Flowers



Visitors to the Sonoran Desert are eager to view hillsides covered in flowers, as they may have seen on a variety of postcards and calendars. Naturally they wonder, “when is the best time to visit?” Those famous photos are taken during years when rainfall, temperature, and timing are favorable. This happens perhaps once every ten years. Since soils and terrain are also an important factor, there is no way to predict any year’s bloom for any one place.

Remember, Saguaro National Park has some flowers in bloom virtually every month of the year and visitors can expect to see at least three flowering seasons. However, it is impossible to predict the timing or extent of blooming of showy desert flowers.

Spring Flower Season March

The spring wildflower season is completely dependent on local conditions. Here at Saguaro National Park, blooms are often best in mid to late

March. Soils at the park are not suited to large displays, but most of the flowers listed in this brochure can be found in a normal season.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COLOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
Twist Flower (<i>Streptanthus carinatus</i>)	White	Wildflower
Wild Zinnia (<i>Zinnia acerosa</i>)	White	Small Shrub
Bladderpod (<i>Lesquerella gordonii</i>)	Yellow	Wildflower
Fiddleneck (<i>Amsinkia intermedia</i>)	Yellow	Wildflower
Desert Marigold (<i>Baileya multiradiata</i>)	Yellow	Wildflower
Paper Flower (<i>Psilostrophe cooperi</i>)	Yellow	Small Shrub
Brittlebush (<i>Encelia farinosa</i>)	Yellow	Small Shrub
Gold Poppy (<i>Eschscholzia mexicana</i>)	Yellow- orange	Wildflower
Globemallow (<i>Sphaeralcea laxa</i>)	Orange	Wildflower
Ocotillo (<i>Fouquieria splendens</i>)	Red	Shrub
Fairy Duster (<i>Calliandra eriophylla</i>)	Pink	Small Shrub
Indigobush (<i>Dalea pulchra</i>)	Pink	Shrub
Parry Penstemon (<i>Penstemon parryi</i>)	Pink	Wildflower
Desert Verbena (<i>Glandularia goodingii</i>)	Purple	Wildflower
Larkspur (<i>Delphinium parishii</i>)	Blue	Wildflower
Desert Lupine (<i>Lupinus sparsiflorus</i>)	Blue	Wildflower

**Cactus Flower Season
April and May**

More reliable in blooming, water-storing cacti put on a good display most years. The first week in May is when you'll likely find the greatest

number of species in bloom at Saguaro National Park. Many shrubs and trees also bloom at this time.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COLOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
Saguaro (<i>Carnegiea gigantea</i>)	White	Cactus
Teddy Bear Cholla (<i>Opuntia bigelovii</i>)	Green	Cactus
Prickly Pear (<i>Opuntia phaeacantha</i>)	Yellow	Cactus
Staghorn Cholla (<i>Opuntia versicolor</i>)	Yellow and Orange	Cactus
Chain Fruit Cholla (<i>Opuntia fulgida</i>)	Pink	Cactus
Fishhook Pincushion (<i>Mammillaria microcarpa</i>)	Pink	Cactus
Strawberry Hedgehog (<i>Echinocereus fasciculatus</i>)	Magenta	Cactus
Claret Cup (<i>Echinocereus triglochidiatus</i>)	Red	Cactus
Soaptree Yucca (<i>Yucca elata</i>)	White	Agave
Palo Verde (<i>Cercidium sp.</i>)	Yellow	Tree
Mesquite (<i>Prosopis velutina</i>)	Cream-Yellow	Tree

**Summer Flower Season
June to September**

This season stretches through the hot summer months and includes a variety of plants. Good summer rains can increase late blooming of many

species, and the high Rincon Mountains harbor many summer-blooming flowers.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COLOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
Night-blooming Cereus (<i>Peniocereus greggii</i>)	White	Cactus
Desert Cotton (<i>Gossypium thurberi</i>)	White	Shrub
Sotol (<i>Dasyilirion wheeleri</i>)	Cream-White	Agave
Century Plant (<i>Agave palmeri</i>)	Yellow	Agave
Desert Senna (<i>Senna bauhinoides</i>)	Yellow	Wildflower
Broom Snakeweed (<i>Gutierrezia microcephala</i>)	Yellow	Wildflower
Burroweed (<i>Isocoma tenuisecta</i>)	Yellow	Small Shrub
Turpentine Bush (<i>Ericameria laricifolia</i>)	Yellow	Shrub
Barrel Cactus (<i>Ferocactus wislizenii</i>)	Yellow to Orange	Cactus

Field Guides

For those wishing to identify the flowers seen on a visit to Saguaro National Park, we recommend bringing a plant guide on your next adventure.

A variety of guides are available for purchase at the visitor centers within Saguaro National Park.