

# Studying Orange County Plants

By Bob Allen

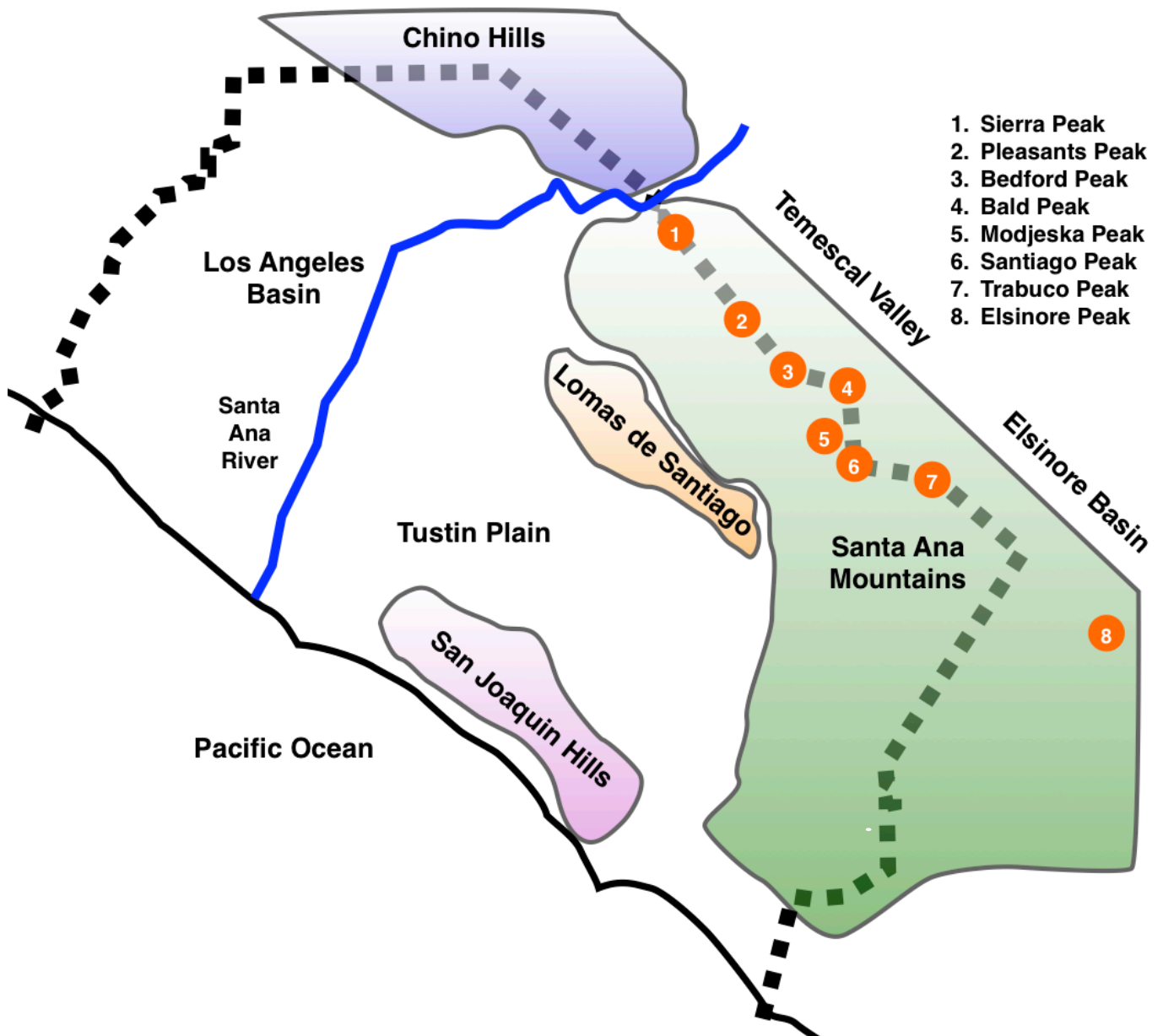
California Native Plant Society, Orange County Chapter

<http://www.occnps.org/>

So, you want to learn about wild plants in Orange County? This little guide should get you started.

## Geography

The geographic features of our area extend a bit beyond our geopolitical borders. Thus we share some natural features with our neighboring counties: Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, and San Diego. The following are our major geographic features.



- **Los Angeles Basin.** A low-lying expanse that encompasses the coastal plain of Los Angeles County southeast into Orange County. The portion of it that lies south of the Santa Ana River, between the Santa Ana Mountains and San Joaquin Hills, is technically called the Tustin Plain.
- **San Joaquin Hills.** A range of seaside hills that parallels the coast, from Newport Beach to Dana Point.
- **Lomas de Santiago.** A range of inland hills that parallels the coast, inland of the Tustin Plain.
- **Chino Hills.** A range of inland hills in the northern portion of our area. Their northwestern region is called the Puente Hills; the two features are sometimes together called the Puente-Chino Hills.
- **Santa Ana Mountains.** A range of peninsular mountains, it extends from the Santa Ana River southeast into western Riverside and San Diego Counties. A steep-sided range of many peaks and deep canyons that support an abundance of wild plants and animals.
- **Temescal Valley.** An inland valley, south of the Santa Ana River, from Corona & the southeast. It lies between the Santa Ana Mountains and the Gavilan Hills. It drains northeast into the Santa Ana River.
- **Elsinore Basin.** An inland valley, southeast of Temescal Valley. It lies between the Santa Ana Mountains and the Gavilan Hills. It drains southeast and northwest into Lake Elsinore.

## Flora of California

Hickman, J.C., editor. 1993. **The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California.** University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.

## Local Flora

- Lathrop, E.W. & R.F. Thorne. 1978. **A Flora of the Santa Ana Mountains, California.** *Aliso* 9(2): 197-278.
- Lathrop, E.W. & R.F. Thorne. 1985. **A Flora of the Santa Rosa Plateau.** An annotated list of the vascular plants and the plant communities of the Santa Rosa Plateau, Santa Ana Mountains. *Southern California Botanists, Special Publication No. 1.* Southern California Botanists, Fullerton, CA.
- Pequegnat, W.E. 1951. **The Biota of the Santa Ana Mountains.** *Pomona College Journal of Entomology and Zoology* 42(3&4):1-84.
- Roberts, F.M., Jr. 1990. **Rare and Endangered Plants of Orange County.** *Crossosoma* 16(2): 3-12. Southern California Botanists, Fullerton, CA.
- Roberts, F.M., Jr. 1995. **Illustrated Guide to the Oaks of the Southern Californian Floristic Province.** The Oaks of Coastal Southern California and Northwestern Baja California, Mexico. F.M. Roberts Publications, Encinitas, CA.
- Roberts, F.M., Jr. 2008. **A Checklist of the Vascular Plants of Orange County, California, third edition.** F.M. Roberts Publications, Encinitas, CA.
- Roberts, F.M., Jr., S.D. White, A.C. Sanders, D.E. Bramlet, & S. Boyd. 2004. **The Vascular Plants of Western Riverside County, California: An Annotated Checklist.** F.M. Roberts Publications, San Luis Rey, CA.
- Roberts, F.M., Jr., S.D. White, A.C. Sanders, D.E. Bramlet, & S. Boyd. 2007. **Additions to the Flora of Western Riverside County, California.** *Crossosoma* 33(2): 55-69.
- Rundel, P.W. & R. Gustafson. 2005. **Introduction to the Plant Life of Southern California.** *California Natural History Guides: 85.* University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.
- Stuart, J.D. & J.O. Sawyer. 2001. **Trees and Shrubs of California.** *California Natural History Guides: University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.*

## Gardening with California Native Plants

Bornstein, C., D. Fross, & B. O'Brien. 2005. **California Native Plants for the Garden**. Cachuma Press, Los Olivos, CA.

Fross, D. & D. Wilken. 2006. **Ceanothus**. Timber Press, Portland, OR.

## Hiking book, for locations:

Schad, J. 2006. **Afoot & Afield in Orange County, 3rd edition**. Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA.

## California Native Plant Gardens

- Golden West College Native Garden.....<http://www.goldenwestcollege.edu/garden/>
- Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, Claremont.....<http://www.rsabg.org/>
- Tree of Life Nursery, SJC.....<http://www.californianativeplants.com/>

## Websites for photos & names

- CalFlora (photographs).....<http://www.calflora.org/>
- Jepson Interchange (online flora).....<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/interchange/>
- Consortium of California Herbaria (specimens).....<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/consortium/>
- CNPS Rare Plant Inventory.....<http://cnps.site.aplus.net/cgi-bin/inv/inventory.cgi>

## Botanical Organizations

- California Native Plant Society (CNPS).....<http://www.cnps.org/>
- Orange County Chapter of CNPS.....<http://www.occnps.org/>
- California Botanical Society.....<http://www.calbotsoc.org/>
- Southern California Botanists.....<http://www.socalbot.org/>
- Northern California Botanists.....<http://www.norcalbotanists.org/>

## Plants Found Only in Orange County or the Santa Ana Mountains

- **Argemone munita ssp. robusta** - Santa Ana Mountains Prickly Poppy (Papaveraceae)
  - Santa Ana Mountains, primarily on the slopes of Santiago Peak, both Orange & Riverside Counties
- **Dudleya stolonifera** - Laguna Beach Live-Forever (Crassulaceae)
  - San Joaquin Hills of Aliso Viejo & Laguna Beach
  - CNPS List 1B.1, State Threatened, Federal Threatened
- **Pentachaeta aurea ssp. allenii** - Allen's Daisy (Asteraceae)
  - San Joaquin Hills & Lomas de Santiago (Limestone Canyon)
  - Dana Point Headlands population extirpated in 2006
  - CNPS List 1B.1
- **Verbesina dissita** - Big-Leaf Crown Beard (Asteraceae)
  - San Joaquin Hills of Laguna Beach
  - CNPS List 1B.1, State Threatened, Federal Threatened