



California Poppy (Poppy Family)

Eschscholzia californica, blooms April to May

California Poppies are widespread in open grasslands. Inland flowers are orange, while coastal ones tend to be more yellow. Inland plants are usually annuals, while coastal flowers are perennial.

The California Poppy is our state flower. Seeds of the California Poppy are poisonous.

Mendocino Indians mashed the dried leaves for pain relief. Miwoks used it when they had the flu or a toothache.

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Silver Lupine (Pea Family)

Lupinus albifrons, blooms April to May

Douglas Silver Lupines are widespread in rocky grasslands. You can see them around Nicasio Reservoir, Rock Springs, and above Deer Park in Fairfax. There are several varieties of this plant, varying in height, some annual and some perennial. The tallest ones grow on Mt. Tamalpais.

Native Americans used Lupine root fibers for fish nets.

Many caterpillars use lupine for food.

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Indian Paintbrush (Figwort Family)

Castilleja affinis, blooms April to June

Indian Paintbrush grows in open grasslands throughout Marin. You can see them at Chimney Rock at Point Reyes and at Olompali State Park.

There are lots of species of Indian Paintbrush in Marin, including four red, a yellow, and a white species. The plant is named for Spanish botanist Domingo Castillejo.

Native Americans used the seed for pinole. They also made decoctions for sores.

Caterpillars of Variable Checkerspots and Leanira Checkerspots eat Indian Paintbrush.

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Mule Ears (Sunflower Family)

Wyethia glabra, blooms April to May

Mule ears grow on open grassy hillsides and openings in woods. You can see them in Elliott nature Preserve, near Nicasio Reservoir, and Deer Park in Fairfax.

The scientific name of *Wyethia* is taken from Nathaniel Wyeth, who discovered the plant in 1834. There are two species of Mule Ears in Marin, one with narrow leaves, and one with wide.

Costanoan Indians made a poultice of roots to treat blisters. Miwok Indians parched the seeds with hot coals and ground them into flour for pinole.

The Painted Lady Butterfly uses Mule Ears for food.

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