

Answers to February Puzzle

NOTE: All except #11 are included in *Yosemite Wildflowers* by Judy & Barry Breckling.

1. Foothill or Tufted Poppy (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*) in the Poppy family (Papaveraceae). California's State Flower, *Eschscholzia californica*, has a pink "donut" at the base of the petals.
2. Western Rue Anemone (*Enemion occidentale*) [formerly *Isopyrum o.*] in the Buttercup family (Ranunculaceae).
3. Baby Blue Eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) in the Borage family (Boraginaceae).
4. Fringedpod (*Thysanocarpus curvipes*) in the Mustard family (Brassicaceae).
5. Bladder Parsnip (*Lomatium utriculatum*) in the Carrot family (Apiaceae). Other common names include Spring Gold and Common Lomatium.
- * 6. Chickweed (*Stellaria media*) in the Pink family (Caryophyllaceae). Non-native.
7. Blue Dicks (*Dipterostemon capitatus*) [formerly *Dichelostemma capitatum*] in the Brodiaea family (Themidaceae).
8. Waterfall Buttercup (*Ranunculus hystriculus*) in the Buttercup family (Ranunculaceae).
9. Common Fiddleneck (*Amsinckia intermedia*) in the Borage family (Boraginaceae). The inflorescence develops into an arch, like the neck of a fiddle – hence the common name and puzzle clue.
10. California Saxifrage (*Micranthes californica*) [prev. *Saxifraga c.*] in the Saxifrage family (Saxifragaceae).
11. California Laurel (*Umbellularia californica*) in the Laurel family (Lauraceae).
12. Slender Phlox (*Microsteris gracilis*) in the Phlox family (Polemoniaceae).
13. Henderson's Shooting Star (*Primula hendersonii*) [formerly *Dodecatheon h.*] in the Primrose family (Primulaceae).

Words of encouragement for children and adults who are put off by the gobbledygook Latin names

When your puzzle-maker was in school, he learned "King Peter Came Over From Greece Saturday" to remember Kingdom → Phylum → Class → Order → Family → Genus → Species. He also learned "My Very Excellent Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas" to remember the planets in our Solar System. As everyone knows, Pizza got demoted. King Peter is still alive and well.

Kingdom is the broadest category, species the narrowest. Scientists categorize plants and animals and give them Latin-sounding names. For example, you and I are *Homo sapiens*. *Homo* is our genus and *sapiens* is our species. Our State tree, the Redwood, is officially known as *Sequoia sempervirens*. Our State flower is *Eschscholzia californica*. The Latin names are scary at first, but they are extremely useful and even fun once you get used to them. Just like in the Harry Potter movies, it is more fun to hear Hermione Granger shout "*Petrificus totalis!*" than "Go to sleep!"

There are many different common names for plants and animals. We would get hopelessly confused if we used only common names. Once you know the genus and species, common names are fine, just as nicknames are fine for friends and relatives once you know their full names. If you don't like a name in the answer key, you can make up your own private term of endearment.

The most important thing, however, is not the names we assign to plants. It is the love and reverence we feel for plants and other living things; and the love and inspiration we receive from them in return.