

## Answers to March Puzzle

NOTE: All except #26 and #29 are included in *Yosemite Wildflowers* by Judy & Barry Breckling.

14. Western Redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*) in the Legume family (Fabaceae). These grow all along Hwy. 140 in the Merced River Canyon, and along the south fork.

15. Buckbrush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*) in the Buckthorn family (Rhamnaceae).

16. Tree Poppy (*Dendromecon rigida*) in the Poppy family (Papaveraceae). These usually don't bloom until April, but a few were starting March 20. These grow on both sides of the ridge but not along the south fork.

17. Sierra Manroot (*Marah horrida*) in the Cucumber family (Cucurbitaceae). Watch for the spiky, cucumber-like fruits in May.

18. True Babystars (*Leptosiphon bicolor*) in the Phlox family (Polemoniaceae). The flowers can be magenta or white, hence the specific name *bicolor*. Extremely abundant in season.

19. Popcornflowers are difficult to ID to species without seeds and a microscope. This one is Rusty-haired Popcornflower (*Plagiobothrys nothofulvus*) in the Borage family (Boraginaceae). A second HC Popcornflower, *P. tenellus*, has much smaller flowers. If you see "big" ones and "small" ones, you are probably seeing these two species.

20. Climbing Bedstraw (*Galium porrigens ssp. tenue*) in the Madder family (Rubiaceae). The 4-petaled flowers are only ~5 mm across, but the plant can be a tangled mass as big as a tumbleweed. A tidier sister species, *G. aparine*, has white flowers and leaves in whorls of 7 instead of 4.

21. Varied-Leaf Nemophila (*Nemophila heterophylla*) in the Borage family (Boraginaceae). This is a case where the common name is merely a rearrangement of the Latin name. (*hetero* = varied) + (*phylla* = leaf). You might as well learn the Latin name. If you mispronounce it like I do, it rhymes.

22. Red Maids (*Calandrinia menziesii*) in the Miner's Lettuce family (Montiaceae). These stand out even at low abundance.

23. The featured species is Bolander's Woodland Star (*Lithophragma bolanderi*) in the Saxifrage family (Saxifragaceae). The less abundant HC species with acute hypanthium is *L. affine*. *affine* always has 3-lobed petals, the lobes being of comparable size. *bolanderi* can have entire petals or petals with 5-7 unequal lobes. Hypanthium angle is the easiest way to keep these two species straight.

24. California Bee-Plant (*Scrophularia californica*) in the Snapdragon family (Scrophulariaceae). Not abundant, but tall and striking when encountered.

25. Long-spurred Plectritis (*Plectritis ciliosa*) in the Valerian family (Valerianaceae). You may be surprised at how abundant this is once you learn to recognize it. A sister species, White Plectritis (*P. macrocera*), also occurs at HC, but I did not see it on March 20.

26. Spider Lupine (*Lupinus benthamii*) in the Legume family (Fabaceae). The palmate leaves have linear-shaped leaflets that resemble spider's legs – hence the common name and puzzle clue. Most lupines have leaflets that are wider in the middle and taper at both ends.

27. Congdon's Milkvetch (*Astragalus congdonii*) in the Legume family (Fabaceae). The population of this plant exploded after the Ferguson Fire. The seeds were lying dormant in the soil for years until the fire or smoke signaled that it was time to germinate.

\* 28. Persian Speedwell (*Veronica persica*) in the Plantain family (Plantaginaceae). Non-native.

29. Hartweg's Tauschia (*Tauschia hartwegii*) in the Carrot family (Apiaceae). Not abundant, but striking when encountered because of the leaves.

30. Fragrant Sumac (*Rhus aromatica*) in the Sumac family (Anacardiaceae).