

FIELD OBSERVATION REPORT

By Mary Wilson

June 2021

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Wildflower Report—On Lancaster Road from Lancaster to Ripley only saw some Jimson weed, mustard and prickly poppy in bloom. Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland did have some of the California buckwheat starting the white clusters of flowers, the male Juniper trees were losing their cones and the female trees were still loaded with berries.



Prickly Poppy (*Argemone corymbosa*). This plant is native to the eastern Mojave Desert and grows in small colonies. It has flower petals that are white and measure 2 to 3-1/2 inches. It will grow to a height of 2 to 5 feet with leaves that are lobed and the leaves and flower buds are covered with sharp thorns. The seeds are highly narcotic. Native American Indians used the seeds to make a salve for burns, open wounds and head lice. The Kawaiisu would roast the seeds to induce vomiting and as a laxative.



There were sheep grazing on 170th St. West between Lancaster Road and Avenue D (Highway 138).

Fires in the valley in May

1. May 2, 2021—Lancaster Brushfire. This was an approximate 400-acre brushfire in the Fairmont area. Highway 138 (Avenue D) was closed from 170th Street West to 210th St. West. This fire was close to Ripley Desert Woodland but did not do any damage there.
2. May 12, 2021—Pine Fire. This was an approximate 450-acre fire near the Pearblossom Highway and 248th Street East in Llano. Two structures were damaged or destroyed.
3. May 20, 2021—Weeville Fire. Another 300-acre fire burned in the Fairmont area near Highway 138 and 210th St. West. No structures were damaged or destroyed.



Desert Willow

Chilopsis Linearis

The Desert Willow, is a native to the southwestern United States and Northern Mexico. Its Latin name *Chilopsis* refers to the lip-like flower and *linearis* refers to the long narrow leaves. It's common name is willow, however, it is not a true willow. It is not a member of the Willow Family (Salicaceae) that are true willows, but is the only species of the Bignonia Family (Bignoniaceae) native to California.

The *Chilopsis* Desert Willow-like plant is a natural protector against flood and erosion damage. It is also an indicator plant that will indicate there is water in

riparian areas like desert washes, creeks, and stream banks.

It is an upright shrub or small tree that grows to a height of 25 feet. The trunk grows up to 6-inches in diameter and has dark brown, scaly bark. Narrow light-green leaves are 3 to 6-inches long with pointed ends.



The flowers are an orchid-like flower about 1-1/4-inches long with white edges and pink-to-purple throats and normally bloom from April to August. The fruit are long, brown, cigar-like pods that grow from 4 to 8-inches. The fruit matures in the autumn, splits in half, and remains on the tree until spring. The pods contain numerous flat, tan seeds with dual hair wings.

It is pollinated by humming birds and large bees, such as carpenter bees and bumblebees.



Indians had many uses for desert willow, the wood being the most important use. The branches are very pliable and not heavy, very strong and highly resistant to decay. For this reason they were used as construction materials in Indian houses. The branches were also used to make enormous basket-like structures that were used to store mesquite pods and other foods collected in large quantities. The wood was also used to make bows, fence posts and fire wood.

Parts of the plant have been used in traditional medicine to treat fungal infections such as candidiasis (a fungal infection caused by a yeast (a type of fungus) in people that can live on the skin or inside the body, in places such as the mouth, throat, gut, and vagina) and athletes foot.

To see this tree in bloom now, you can go to the Prime Desert Woodland and walk the Pavilion.

WHO WAS JANE S. PINHEIRO?

Compiled by Mrs. Vernon (Augusta D.) Thompson

Feb. 1982

Jane S. Pinheiro was born September 19th 1907 in Denver, Colorado. She received her formal education in Salt Lake City, and was graduated from the University of Utah with a teacher's credential. She moved to Los Angeles and later to Pasadena. It was in Pasadena that she met her husband, Joseph Pinheiro, to whom she was married on September 25th 1930. They were married for forty-eight years until her death October 14, 1978. In 1941 her husband's work brought the Pinheiro's to Antelope Valley and in 1945 to Quartz Hill.

Mrs. Pinheiro began to paint wildflowers even before she came to Antelope Valley. She received her first blue ribbon award as a painter at the Los Angeles County Fair in Pomona in 1930. The painting was a wildflower scene. In the Antelope Valley the profusion of wildflowers inspired her to create more and more pictures, and to become obsessed with the desire to protect the areas where they appeared. Strictly honest and forthright in character her pictures portray that same characteristic. They are both artistically and botanically accurate. It is this quality that makes them so valuable.

"A prophet or artist is often without honor in his own country." So, it was with Jane. It was many years before the people in Antelope Valley recognized the value of the works of this self-taught botanist and artist. Eventually some learned botany professors from the University of Cal. At Davis visited the Wildflower Center, at that time on Sierra Highway. After closely inspecting the display that Mrs. Pinheiro had arranged, they whispered in the ears of an attendant, "This collection of wildflower paintings is very valuable and should be preserved for future generations. You people should do something about it." The attendant was a member of the Lancaster Woman's Club who relayed the message to the club members. The club soon formed an ad hoc committee called the Wildflower Preservation Committee and invited other groups of interested persons to join. At one time there were 23 organizations represented in this committee.

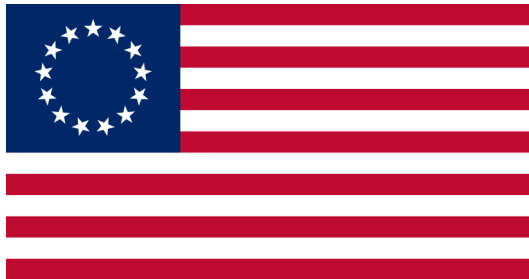
At about the same time as the above incident, the Theodore Payne Foundation and Nursery in Sun Valley purchased one hundred of the paintings. At last, the talent of Jane Pinheiro began to be appreciated. The Wildflower Preservation Committee decided to negotiate for 135 of the paintings. This number has been added to and the total is over 150. The collection has been donated to the Department of Parks and Recreation of Antelope Valley, and will be displayed in the Antelope Valley, for the education and enjoyment of all who visit here.

The California State Parks Foundation is a non-political, non-funded, statewide volunteer organization. In cooperation with the Wildflower Preservation Committee and other organizations throughout the State enough money and donated lands were given to begin the State project of the Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve, and eventually also the Jane Pinheiro Wildflower Interpretive Center. Matching funds were secured from the State and National Governments "Open Space Funds" to complete the project to date.

Although credit for the success of this project is due to many individuals and organizations Jane Pinheiro was the guiding light and inspiration for many years. She was able by cajoling, pleading, working, and sometimes by sarcasm to awaken people to the threat of the loss of the natural beauty of the fragile desert environment.

She was an ardent conservationist and did many things. One of her outstanding accomplishments was to help secure Seven Los Angeles County Wildflower Sanctuaries in the Antelope Valley. She chaired the committee which established the Saddleback Buttes State Park on 170th and J Streets East. As a result of her work as an outstanding environmental volunteer she received many awards local, state and national. Some are as follows: The First Feinstein Environmental Award in 1967 from the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry in the amount of \$1,000.00. In 1975 she flew to Washington D.C. to receive the National Oak Leaf Service Award presented in recognition of her conservation efforts.

Besides her interest in the desert environment, Jane was also a tireless civic leader. She had an innate sense of service and was a hard worker so she found many areas where her talents and abilities were needed, such as: She served on the Antelope Valley Fair Board for ten years; she was on the original board of the Antelope Valley Medical Center; she was a past president of the Quartz Hill Chamber of Commerce. She rated "Woman of the Year" from both the Lancaster and Quartz Hill Chambers of Commerce. She served as President of both.



FLAG DAY **June 14th**



On June 14, 1777, the Second Continental Congress passed the Flag Resolution which stated: "The flag would have the thirteen states represented by the thirteen stripes of alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

The 50 stars on the flag represent the 50 states of the United States of America, and the 13 stripes represent the thirteen British colonies that declared independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain

Original intentions

The symbolism of the colors red, white and blue in the beginning stated: white signified purity and innocence; red, hardiness and valor; and blue signifying vigilance, perseverance and justice. Over the years, other interpretations have included that red is for the blood of patriots, spilled in the fight to protect the country. In 1986, president Ronald Reagan gave his own interpretation, saying, "The colors of our flag signify the qualities of the human spirit we Americans cherish. Red for courage and readiness to sacrifice; white for pure intentions and high ideals; and blue for vigilance and justice."