

This Saturday, put away the iPhone, and instead of walking a wire and Googling earth or living by satellite alone, go wireless. Unplug. Turn off, and tune in. Dial in naturally, and don't be that April Fool's guy and stay inside. Be civilly disobedient to the electronic world and take a hike. Walk on the wild side. Go where the wild things are. Be sure to bring some cool, clear water ... water ... water.

The hills are alive with wildflowers in kaleidoscopic hues and colors. It's a show of and for your lifetime. Watch butterflies hover over the wildflower, primordial-oozed wetlands and meadows. Free and flowing, wild and uncontained, though in rhythm with earth's past and present continuing and living evolution. Experience the natural, wild world.

See the world through the eyes of our local John Muir naturalist, Rex Burress. Listen to the natural sounds — the rustle of the wind upon the native grasses and trees swaying. Feel the sun and the elements. Warm your body and soul, and reconnect to the simple wonders that naturally enrich our senses. Watch the river flow on its timeless journey.

You may catch a glimpse of Siddhartha sitting by the water's edge. Or you may see Christopher Robin and Winnie the Pooh in the Hundred Acre Wood at Riverbend searching for woozels and weezels.

All this can be accomplished by following the Pied Piper of the Wildflower and Nature Festival, Loren Gill, who established the festival three years ago. Who better to herald this event than a native Californian and a true protector of the natural world.

This Saturday is your opportunity to feel free and natural. Discover our local and national treasures, such as Table Mountain, Butte Creek Canyon, Feather River Canyon, Feather Falls, Vina Plains, Gray Lodge, Bald Rock, Oroville Wildlife Area, Bidwell Park, Bille Park, and Riverbend. Those are just a few of our treasured natural resources.

This year's Wildflower and Nature Festival will host informational and educational booths, as well as vendors selling a variety of nature-oriented items including native plants, polished rocks, jewelry, wildlife photography and art, and herbal soaps.

The Native Plant Society will offer guided hikes of the wildflowers at Table Mountain at 1 and 2 p.m. Maps and information regarding the hikes will be available at the Native Plant Society's booth. And don't forget to bring the kids. There will be cookie decorating, face painting, pony rides, and a bounce house.

For more information about the Wildflower and Nature Festival, contact FRRPD at 533-2011.

Quote

"This country will not be a permanently good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a reasonably good place for all of us to live in."

— Theodore Roosevelt

"I believe that there is a subtle magnetism in nature, which, if we unconsciously yield to it, will direct us aright."

— Henry David Thoreau

"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."

— Albert Einstein

"Let us dance in the sun, wearing wild flowers in our hair."

— Susan Polis Schutz

"I will love the sun for it warms my bones; yet I will love the rain for it cleanses my spirit. I will love the light for it shows me the way; yet I will love the darkness for it shows me the stars."

— Og Mandino, *The Greatest Salesman in the World*, 1968.

Fun Facts

The California State Floral Society voted the California poppy as the Official State Flower in 1890, and poppy became the state flower by law in 1903. As the state's official flower, the native poppy is protected and cannot be picked or destroyed.

Native Americans valued the golden poppy as food and a source of oil. The California poppy has also been used to relieve toothaches by cutting the root and directly applying the juices. It can also be made into a tea and used for headaches, anxiety, and sleeplessness.

Upcoming Events

April 1-June 1 — Sign-ups for the Junior Giants non-competitive baseball program. League starts June 15. For more info., contact Bridget at FRRPD, 533-2011.

April 4, 10-4 p.m. third annual Wildflower and Nature Festival at Riverbend Park. Enjoy educational booths, wildlife photography and art, native plant sales, guided hikes at Table Mountain, pony rides, food, and more!

Sign up now for summer softball. FRRPD offers men's slow pitch Tuesday nights

and co-ed Thursday nights. \$400/team. Packets due by April 10. For more info., contact Bridget at FRRPD, 533-2011.

Be sure to check out FRRPD's web site at www.frrpd.com.

See you in the parks!