

Stop and Smell the Flowers

(Information on Texas Wildflowers and the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center)

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You know it's spring in Texas when you see adorably dressed children frolicking through patches of bluebonnets and posing for pictures. But don't be so preoccupied with the promise of a perfect picture that you forget to stop and smell the flowers.

Texas wildflowers, with more than 5,000 different species blooming, are among the most beautiful in the nation and with the short-lived bloom timeline from March to April, you will want to plan your viewing adventures early to optimize enjoyment.

The Texas Highways website at <https://texashighways.com/wildflowers/> is a treasure trove of information about our springtime Texas flora. It provides information on topics like the top 20 wildflowers of Texas and highlights events dedicated to viewing our colorful Texas beauties. Wildflower viewing is a destination for many who live outside of Texas, contributing to lots of blooming dollars in tourism revenue for our state. Since you're already here, think about making a wildflower road trip part of your travel plans for the spring.

If staycations are more your style, and you want to bring the beauty of wildflowers to your own backyard, the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin provides lists of native plants by region at https://www.wildflower.org/collections/collection.php?collection=TX_central. Find out what species of plants will best bring native Texas beauty to your backyard. The Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center is also a great staycation destination to visit in person; a bit further than your backyard, but still in the area. Current restrictions require that you make a reservation and masks are required throughout your visit.

If you are headed down our flower-lined highways this spring, wave to the bluebonnet photographers and take in the kaleidoscope of colors that nature herself has invented. For as with the streaming site Netflix, you must wait an entire year before the next season of these perennials returns.

