



# Texas Bluebonnets

Bluebonnet (Lupinus) is the Texas State Flower. The Texas Legislature designated all species of Bluebonnet as the state flowers of Texas in 1971.

**Kingdom:** Plantae

**Division:** Magnoliophyta

**Class:** Magnoliopsida

**Order:** Fabales

**Family:** Fabaceae

**Genus:** Lupinus

Some main species of bluebonnets are found growing naturally only in Texas and no where else in the world.

The Bluebonnet, Texas State Flower, is a major attraction in Central Texas during springtime. Bluebonnets grow in half wooden barrels, Raised flower beds, hanging baskets, mixtures, on hillsides, roadsides and meadows.

The mildly fragrant racemes on the Bluebonnet are in shades of lavender, 8-12cm long, and each raceme contains 25-40 florets. Each blue bonnet flower floret is 1-2cm long and has a 3-6mm wide white banner spot in the center of the banner petal. This spot often turns to reddish purple with age, but the Bluebonnet florets sometimes shrivel before the color change takes place.

The pedicel of the Bluebonnet flower has a length of 6-12mm and the flower spike stem's diameter is 2-4mm. The Texas Bluebonnet (*Lupinus texensis*) specie is the favorite of the Texans.

## Facts About The Bluebonnet

- The genus of Bluebonnet, *Lupinus subcarnosus* is also known as Buffalo clover, wolf flower, and by the Mexicans - el conejo.
- Texas Bluebonnet is a hardy winter annual native to Texas.
- Bluebonnet Flowers are densely arranged on a spike with a characteristic ice white terminal tip.
- As the Texas Bluebonnet flower ages, one of the top petals turns purple-red.
- Blooming period of the Bluebonnet flowers is between March-May.
- The last racemes of the Bluebonnet, produced during the season tend to be shorter than the first racemes.
- At full bloom, the Texas Bluebonnet plants are 30-50cm tall, 50-70cm in diameter, and have a mounded form.
- The foliage of Texas Bluebonnet is yellow-green and is composed of alternate, palmately compound leaves generally with 5 leaflets. Each individual leaflet is oblanceolate, 3-5cm long, and 12-16mm wide at the widest position. Petiole length is 4-6 cm. Pods (30-50mm long and 6-10mm wide) become visible about one month after anthesis, are densely pubescent, and contain 4-7 seeds each.
- Seeds of Texas Bluebonnets are light brown occasionally speckled with black.
- April 24 is Texas State Wildflower Day.



# Bluebonnet Trails

## Bluebonnet Trails

Although there are many driving routes (known as bluebonnet trails) throughout the state, a good place to start is near the city of Burnet, which is known as the Bluebonnet Capital of Texas. Burnet is roughly 40 miles northwest of Austin. Follow TX Hwy 29 west out of Burnet for 3-1/2 miles, then turn right (north) on Ranch Road 234 and follow it about 6 miles. Turn left on Graphite Mine Road, which will eventually meet TX Hwy 29. Turn left to return to Burnet. A variation of this drive will give you different but equally spectacular views of bluebonnets as well as of Lake Buchanan. Follow TX Hwy 29 west and again turn right on RR 234. If you stay on this road, you'll have 15 miles of vistas before it finally dead-ends. You can return via the same route or make the turn on Graphite Mine Road. If you want to see even more of the Hill Country, simply stay on TX Hwy 29 west all the way to Llano, a distance of about 30 miles. In Llano, turn left (south) on TX Hwy 16 and follow it to Fredericksburg (39 miles). In Fredericksburg turn left (east) on U.S. Hwy 290 and follow it 32 miles to Johnson City, then follow U.S. Hwy 281 north 37 miles to Burnet.

Another beautiful bluebonnet drive leads west from Brenham on U.S. Hwy 290 to Giddings (35 miles), south on U.S. Hwy 77 to LaGrange (20 miles), then north on TX 159 and 237, which will get you back to U.S. 290 in the city of Burton, about 15 miles west of Brenham. Brenham lies midway between Austin and Houston.

## State Wildflower Day

Each April 24, Texas celebrates State Wildflower Day, and many cities have pageants, parades, and other celebrations. A partial listing of cities includes Mason, Chappell Hill, Keney, Glen Rose, Ennis, and Hughes Springs. The best way to learn what is scheduled is to contact the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.

### Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

4801 La Crosse Avenue, Austin, TX 78739  
(512) 292-4100

During March, April, and May, the Department of Transportation also has a telephone hotline with information on where bluebonnets are blooming:

### Department of Transportation

(800) 452-9292



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