

# The State Flower of Texas



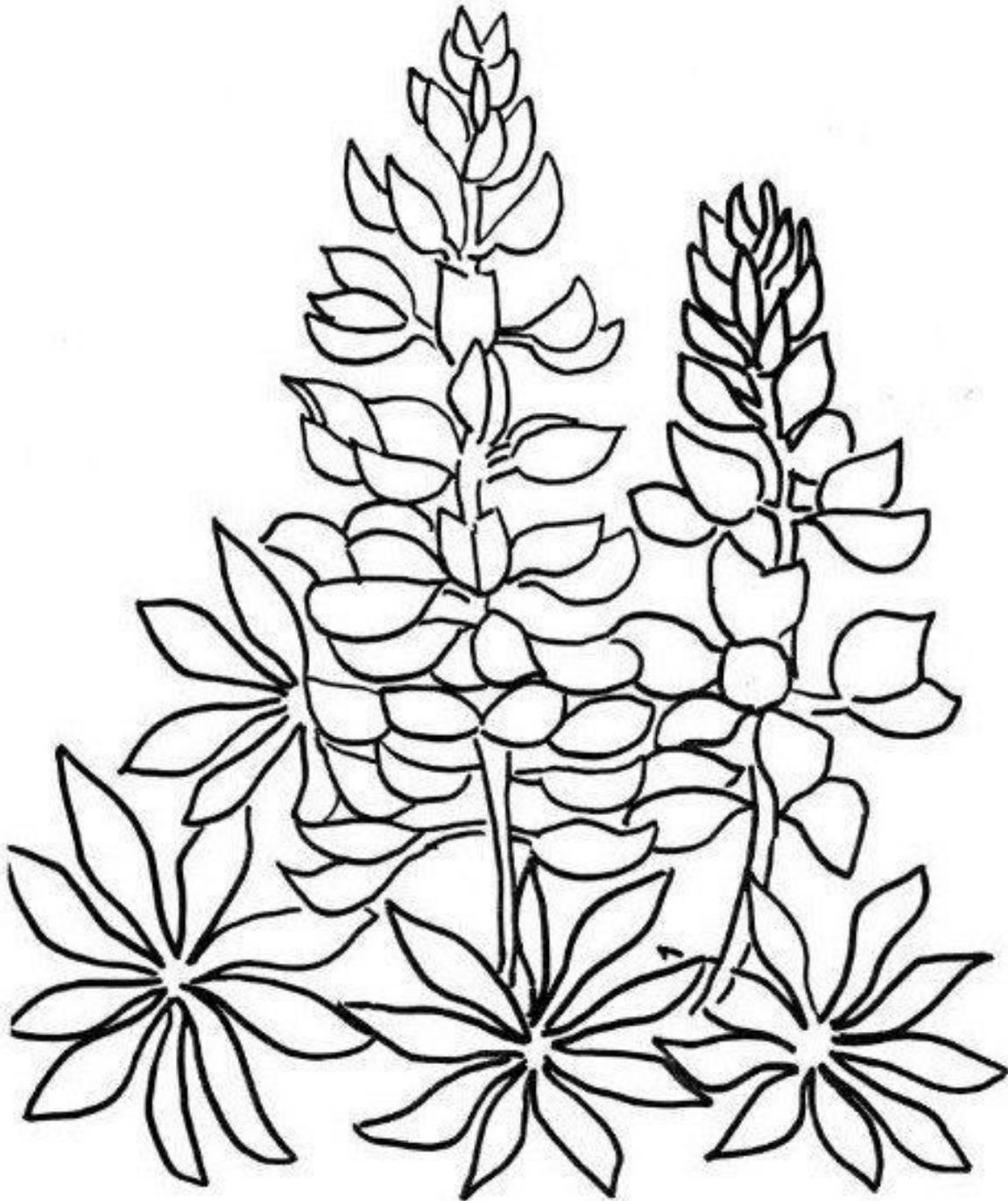
Introduce the bluebonnet as the state flower of Texas. Teachers should provide a photograph, plastic or silk bluebonnet flower. For an art project, students could draw the flower and laminate their drawing and use as a bookmark. An alternative activity would be to read books to the class discussing Texas wildflowers. One well known children's author is Tomie de Paola, who has written books about the Indian Paint Brush and the Bluebonnet.

**Teachers note:** it is against the law to deface state property. Therefore, picking bluebonnets from a state park or along a highway where the state has planted wildflowers is unlawful. Moreover, one flower could possibly contain up to 20 blooms. Once picked, that means 20 less bluebonnets will grow next year.

**Consider this:** if you have 20 students in your class and each picks one bluebonnet, a potential 400 less bluebonnets would be enjoyed next year. Share this information with your students so they understand the importance of preserving nature.

For further information on wildflowers of Texas, contact the **National Wildflower Research Center**, <http://www.wildflower.org>, 4801 La Crosse Avenue, Austin, TX 78739, telephone (512) 232-0100. The National Wildflower Research Center, opened and dedicated by Lady Bird Johnson in 1995, is open to the public. Check their website for hours, tickets and tours.

# My Texas Bluebonnets



## Wild Socks

**Instructions:** Have each student bring an old sock to school. Take a field trip to any local field with wildflowers. Have each student mist their sock with a spray bottle of water, put the old sock over their shoe, and walk through the field collecting various seeds on their sock. Next, take sock off, hang in a sunny area, mist each day, and watch the wildflowers sprout!



## Wildflower Seeds

**Instructions:** Have students plant wildflower seeds in cups and observe their growth. Discuss and ask students to describe the texture, color, and smell of each wildflower. Teachers note: there is a good chance the wildflower seeds will not grow to flower, the teacher should take the class on a field trip to a wildflower field in this case.



## The Popcorn Project

**Instructions:** Using popcorn, shake in dry purple/blue tempera paint, coloring the popcorn and have students make bluebonnet pictures. (You can also use cotton for this activity.) Students might want to use grasses collected to form the stem and leaves of the flower.