

Leave Natural Objects and Cultural Artifacts

Natural objects of beauty or interest such as petrified wood or colored rocks add to the experience at this site and should be left so others can experience a sense of discovery.

The same ethic is applicable to cultural artifacts found on all public land. Cultural artifacts are protected by the Archaeological Resources Protection Act. It is illegal to remove or disturb archeological sites, historic sites, or artifacts such as pot sherds, arrowheads, structures, and even antique bottles.



Please return this interpretive guide to the trail register prior to departing the area.

Hard copies of these materials are available by contacting:

Bureau of Land Management
Buffalo Field Office
1425 Fort Street
Buffalo, WY 82834
(307) 684-1100



Petrified Tree Flora A Field Guide

Welcome to Dry Creek Petrified Tree Environmental Education Area! Please use this field guide to explore the many wonderful plants at this site. If you find something missing from this guide, take a picture and send it to us at Buffalo_WYMail@blm.gov with the subject "Petrified Tree Plants" to help contribute to our understanding of Petrified Tree biodiversity!



This guide is organized by flower color, with green representing species for which flowers are not primary identifiers. Plants are native unless otherwise noted.

Do not eat any of the plants, even if they are described in this guide as having berries or other fruit. Safety first!



Broom Snakeweed
Gutierrezia sarothrae

This bushy, short-lived shrub contains numerous flower heads arranged in clusters. It blooms August to October.

Leafy Wildparsley
Musineon divaricatum

Growing on open hillsides and blooming in May and June, the flowers of this member of the carrot family grow in bunches of multiple flowers, with each flower measuring about .04 inch (1 mm).



Crested Wheatgrass
Agropyron cristatum

A perennial bunchgrass, this plant can grow up to 2.5 feet (0.76 m) tall. Each bunch has many dense spikelets with flattened heads. NON-NATIVE

Smooth Brome
Bromus inermis

This perennial grass is characterized by a conspicuous “M” on the blade and greenish to purple spikelets. It flowers May through June. NON-NATIVE



Cheatgrass
Bromus tectorum

This grass has long drooping stalks that turn purple at maturity and seeds that easily stick to clothes and fur. NON-NATIVE



Wyoming Big Sagebrush
Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis

Wyoming's official state shrub, and important for a wide range of animals, this plant improves the soil and prevents erosion.



Fringed Sage
Artemisia frigida

This plant blooms in summer with small yellow flowers. Young plants are compact.

Prairie Junegrass
Koeleria macrantha

This perennial bunchgrass can grow more than 3 feet (0.9 m) tall. Beginning in spring, it bears dense, silvery green, spike-like seedheads that turn tan by mid-summer.



Yellow Prairie Violet
Viola nuttalli

Usually fewer than 6 inches (15 cm) tall, this yellow flower sports brown or purple lines emanating from the center. It blooms in May and June.



Common Twinpod
Physaria didymocarpa

A member of the mustard family, this flowering plant produces 4-inch (10-cm) stems with dense bunches of yellow flowers.



Western Wallflower
Erysimum asperum

This flower, which grows in large bunches, is located in sandy, dry, open areas from Canada to New Mexico and blooms from May to June.



Plains Prickly Pear Cactus
Opuntia polyacantha

With flattened, segmented stems, 1-10 barbed spines per areole, and large yellow, pink or red flowers, this cactus can be found on exposed sandy slopes.

Rubber Rabbitbrush
Ericameria nauseosa

This is the most common and widespread rabbitbrush species in the West, found over a wide range of elevations and habitat types. It blooms July to October.



Common Sunflower
Helianthus annuus

With large and showy flowers, this annual can grow up to 10 feet (3 m) tall. The hairy stem is branched and may bear several flowers.



Needleandthread Grass
Hesperostipa comata

Adapted to prairies, this bunchgrass has unusually long, twisted leaves and stiff bristles.



Ellen Hildebrandt

Green Needlegrass
Nassella viridula

Native to North America, this grass forms tufts of stems that can grow almost 4 feet (1.2 m) tall. It grows in a variety of habitats, with leaves that end in a threadlike tip.



Bottlebrush Squirreltail
Elymus elymoides

This plant grows in a variety of ecosystems. Native to most of the western part of North America, it is a species of wild rye.





Blue or Purple Mustard
Chorispora tenella

This plant has wavy-edged alternate leaves and tiny flowers that range from lavender to magenta. It blooms in June and July.
NON-NATIVE

Alfalfa
Medicago sativa

Cultivated as an important crop in many countries, this perennial plant has trifoliate leaves and clusters of small purple flowers.
NON-NATIVE



Bluebunch Wheatgrass
Pseudoroegneria spicata

This highly variable plant can grow 1.5 to 4 feet (0.45 to 1.2 m) tall. It is extremely drought-adapted and grows well in a variety of habitats.



Arnica
Arnica spp.

Usually producing one daisy-like flower per stem, this plant can grow up to 19.5 inches (50 cm) tall.



Tapertip Hawksbeard
Crepis acuminata

Often you will see just the leaves in the summer, this plant produces a branching stem with flowers at the top of the branches.

Curlycup Gumweed
Grindelia squarrosa
Blooming late June to September, this member of the sunflower family is known for its gummy resin found on the flower heads.



Common Dandelion
Taraxacum officinale

A widely-recognized member of the Sunflower Family, this plant can flower between April and October and matures into the well-known balls of wind-dispersed seeds.
NON-NATIVE



Yellow Salsify / Goatsbeard
Tragopogon dubius

Easily mistaken for a dandelion, this European perennial has long green bracts that extend beyond the flower's petals. The flower can close during the peak heat of the day and blooms June through September.
NON-NATIVE



Prickly Lettuce
Lactuca serriola

This plant, with its distinctive prickly-edged leaves, can grow up to 6.5 feet (2 m) tall. It has numerous small yellow flowers that look similar to dandelion flowers.
NON-NATIVE



Wavyleaf Thistle
Cirsium undulatum

With urn-shaped flower buds, and densely hairy leaves, this biennial plant is easily mistaken for other thistle species. It can be distinguished from other thistles by its wavy leaves, for which it gets its name.



Canada Thistle
Cirsium arvense

With smaller flowers than other thistle varieties, this plant grows 2-5 feet (06.-1.5 m) tall. This plant spreads by both seeds and roots.
NON-NATIVE and NOXIOUS



Scotch Thistle
Onopordum acanthium

This hardy plant can grow up to 8 feet (2.4 m) tall. It bears many flowers, and its leaves have sharp spines with a gray-green appearance.
NON-NATIVE



Field Milkvetch
Astragalus agrestis

Often found with sagebrush, the flowers of this sturdy-stemmed plant grow in clusters of up to 15 buds. It blooms May through July.



Two-grooved Milkvetch
Astragalus bisulcatus

Blooming from April to July, the flowers grow on long, simple stems up to 39 inches (100 cm) tall. This leafy perennial accumulates selenium, which can be toxic to livestock.



Wild Vetch
Vicia Americana

Flowering between May and August, and a little less than 1 inch (2.5 cm) long, these flowers are usually found clustered on slender stems.



Yellow Sweet Clover
Melilotus officinalis

This plant has a 2-year life cycle with very little growth in the first year and tall stalks with abundant yellow flowers in the second year from June to September.

NON-NATIVE



Tall Tumble Mustard
Sisymbrium altissimum

This introduced plant sports small clusters of yellow flowers at the end of long, branching stalks that bloom June to August.

NON-NATIVE



Hood's Phlox
Phlox hoodii

Very common, one of the first blooming flowers in Spring, blooms April-May. This flower is typically white, but can also be lavender.





Sego Lily
Calochortus nuttallii

This flower is found in dry habitats across the western United States and blooms in June and July. Growing 10-20 inches (25-51 cm) on a slender stem, the flowers have three large petals with yellow bases and three narrower sepals.

Drummond's Milkvetch
Astragalus drummondii

This hardy plant can live in a variety of climates. It has several large stems with many flowers growing above the leaves. Blooming in June and July, the flowers produce 1.5 inch (4 cm) long drooping hairless pods.



Hooker's Sandwort
Arenaria hookeri

With sharp leaves and sepals, these plants grow in dense clumps with closely spaced flowers. They bloom May to July.

Rocky Mountain Bee Plant
Cleome serrulata

This showy flower can grow up to 4 feet (1.2 m) tall. The flowers, clustered on an elongated stem, have an unpleasant smell.



Dotted Blazing Star
Liatris punctata

This perennial plant usually grows in clusters of stems with tightly-packed flower heads arranged at the top. It can grow 1-3 feet (0.3-0.9 m) tall.



Purple Prairie Clover
Dalea purpurea

A member of the pea family, Purple Prairie Clover helps other plants by providing natural fertilizer. These flowers provide needed color later in the growing season, producing mature seeds August through September.





Fuzzy-tongue Penstemon
Penstemon eriantherus

This plant has special value to native bees. It has a thick taproot and grows in dry, open habitat. The flowers grow at the top of several stems and bloom May to July.



Silverleaf Scurfpea
Pediomelum argophyllum

Growing low to the ground, these tiny flowers (<0.25 in, <0.6 cm) are arranged in whorls of 2-8 flowers. Leaves are covered with shiny hairs that can give a silvery appearance.



Threadleaf Phacelia
Phacelia linearis

This annual herb grows an erect, hairy stalk topped with one or several small purple and white flowers. It blooms in May and June.

Common Yarrow
Achillea millefolium

This drought-tolerant species has highly dissected, feathery, fern-like leaves that, when crushed, have a strong herbal smell, and white flower clusters that form a dome shape.

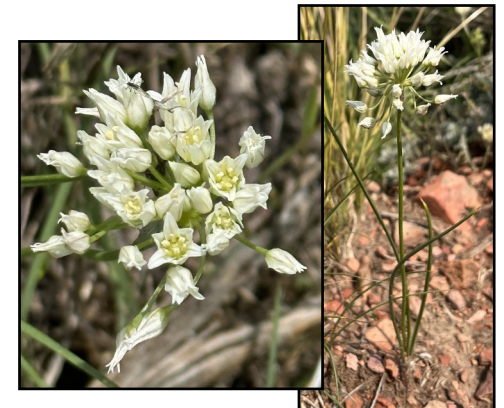


Miner's Candle
Cryptantha celosioides

This plant is named for its stout, candle-like profile. Blooming in May and June, many small, five-petaled flowers grow along its stem.

Prairie or Textile Onion
Allium textile

Covering a wide range of the central and western U.S., this flower produces bell-shaped flowers that bloom in June and July.



Fleabane
Erigeron spp.

With more than 150 species in North America, this common plant blooms June to September. Its color ranges from white to pink to pale purple.



Aster
Symphyotrichum spp.

This member of the daisy family blooms later, August-September. It can range in color from purple to pink to white.

Field Pennycress
Thlaspi arvense

Blooming with small white flowers in June and July, oil from this plant has been found to be a highly renewable resource for biodiesel and jet fuel.
NON-NATIVE

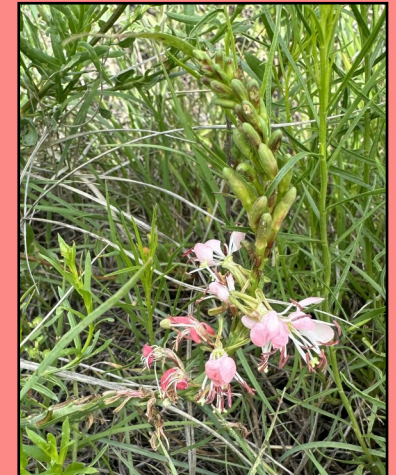


Scarlet Globemallow
Sphaeralcea coccinea

The palm-shaped leaves of this plant can appear greenish-gray due to a covering of soft, velvety hairs. These small flowers, about 1 inch (2.5 cm) wide, bloom from May to August.

Scarlet Beeblossom
Oenothera suffrutescens

Blooming in June and July, these fragrant flowers open from bottom to top, starting out white, fading to pink, and finally scarlet, all in the same day. Look closely at the leaves as they may be covered in gray hairs.



Showy Milkweed
Asclepias speciosa

A favorite of Monarch butterflies, this flower usually grows on a stalk that grows up to 3 feet (0.9 m) tall. Leaves are large and oval.