

Nature Notes

Pretty Posies!



Wildflowers blooming along the trails in the Nature Park attract our attention for their beauty and fragrance. Some of us only note their presence while others are interested in identifying the plant and then learning more about it. Folks might be interested in the naming of the plant (Devil's Club), medicinal uses (Round-leaved Alumroot), aroma (Redstem Ceanothus), aboriginal use (Bitterroot), or its Latin derivatives (*Linnaea borealis*). For whatever reason we notice wildflowers, they seldom fail to delight us!



Spring Beauty
Photo K. Goodwin

In 2002, local nature enthusiast Ruth Goodwin compiled a list of wildflowers growing in the Nature Park for visitors and locals alike to use to assist in identifying these plants. This year, she would like to update that checklist. For her, wildflowers have many charms but mostly she likes to “hunt” for wildflowers in the Park. As the snow melts, anticipation grows for finding the first blooms. Bluebells (*Mertensia longiflora*), Narrow-leaved Desert-parsley

(*Lomatium triternatum*) and Spring Beauties (*Claytonia lanceolata*) flower first on Sunflower Hill in early April. Any area that opens to the warm spring sun will also be a place to look for our first wildflowers.

By June, wildflowers are blooming throughout the park and represent many plant families. There are roses (Old Man's Whiskers, Wild Strawberries, and Graceful Cinquefoil), buttercups (Blue Clematis, Western Meadowrue and Baneberry) and figworts (Yellow Owl Clover, Sickletop Lousewort and Small-flowered Blue-eyed Mary). What wonderful names! We also have numerous wild lilies, violets, and orchids. In 2007, Pam Chenery organized a Calypso Orchid count which resulted in over 1500 blooms being found!

Ruth will lead an outing July 27 to identify wildflowers and look for species not on the checklist. She already has sixteen additional plants to add. Join the hunt! Check the web site for details of all outings in the Nature Park as well as for a checklist of wildflowers, butterflies, and birds.



Calypso Orchids
Photo K. Goodwin

Visit www.rockies.net/kimberley/naturepark for a hard copy of this article or to learn more about Nature Park events.