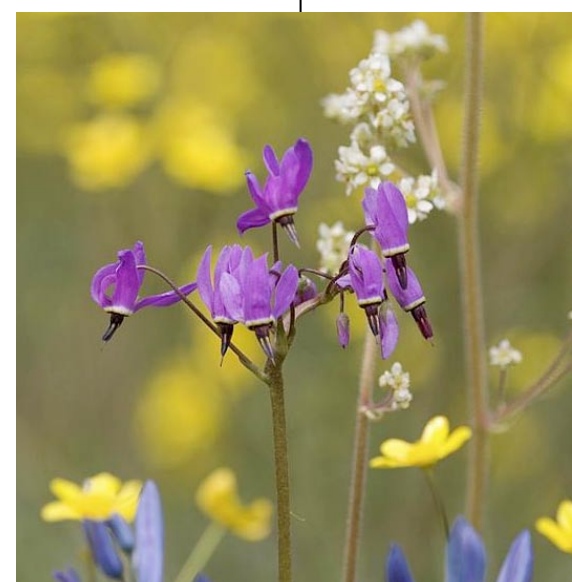


Prairie Plants Mark the Change of Seasons

// From February to July they look like gardens, such is the brilliance and variety of the flowers with which they are adorned. //

J.G. COOPER, NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD SURVEY BOTANICAL REPORT, 1853-1861

EARLY SPRING BLOOMS



Broad-leaved shooting star
Dodecatheon hendersonii
The pollen of the shooting star is released only by the vibrations of a bumblebee's buzzing wings. This is called "buzz pollination."



Spring gold or fine-leaved desert-parsley
Lomatium utriculatum
This plant is a favorite food for the caterpillars of swallowtail butterflies.



Early blue violet
Viola adunca
The caterpillars of zereine fritillary butterflies need dense patches of violets — their most important food. In late summer, adult fritillaries deposit their eggs among wilting violet foliage.



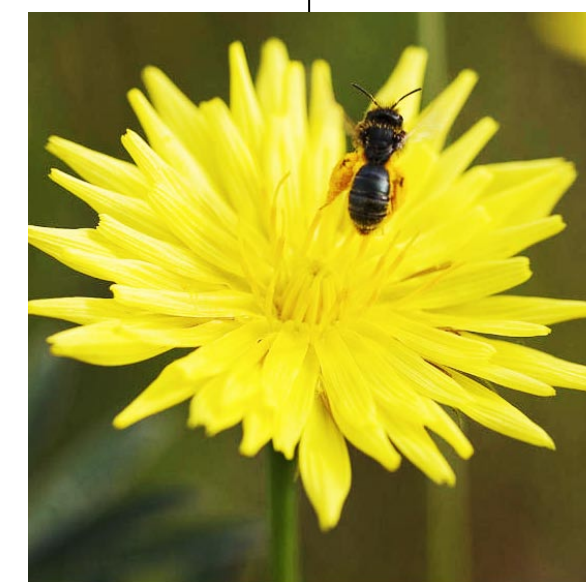
Chocolate lily
Fritillaria affinis var. affinis
This unusual flower emerges from a scaly bulb surrounded by rice-like bulbets.



Camas
Camassia quamash
Camas is the signature flower of the prairies.



Western buttercup
Ranunculus occidentalis
This buttercup is a native prairie wildflower, not the weed of lawns and wet pastures.



Cut-leaf microseris
Microseris laciniata
Microseris looks like a dandelion but is a native prairie flower. It is a favorite nectar source for butterflies.



Meadow death-camas
Zigadenus venenosus
The leaves and bulbs of this poisonous plant are similar to edible blue camas.



Graceful cinquefoil
Potentilla gracilis
This member of the rose family flowers atop long wirey stems.



Oregon sunshine or woolly sunflower
Eriophyllum lanatum
Each blossom is made of many tiny individual flowers arranged in a composite head.



Common harebell or Bluebells-of-Scotland
Campanula rotundifolia
The adaptable common harebell is found in grasslands and rock outcroppings from sea level to timberline.



Harvest brodiaea
Brodiaea coronaria
Drought-tolerant brodiaeas bloom later than most other lilies. Their tall flower stalks are supported by other plants and grasses.



Spikelike goldenrod or dune goldenrod
Solidago spathulata
Goldenrod provides nectar for butterflies in mid-summer, when other flowers have gone to seed.



Prairie lupine
Lupinus lepidus
Lupines are important food plants for caterpillars of Puget blue and silvery blue butterflies.



Coastal reindeer lichen
Cladonia mitis
Dry prairie soils are not a problem for reindeer lichen, which can absorb moisture from the air. They grow very slowly, and take a long time to re-establish if they are disturbed.



Kinnikinnick or common bearberry
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi
In winter, birds and small mammals eat the bright red berries. Come spring, the caterpillars of western brown elfin butterflies nibble on the leaves.

