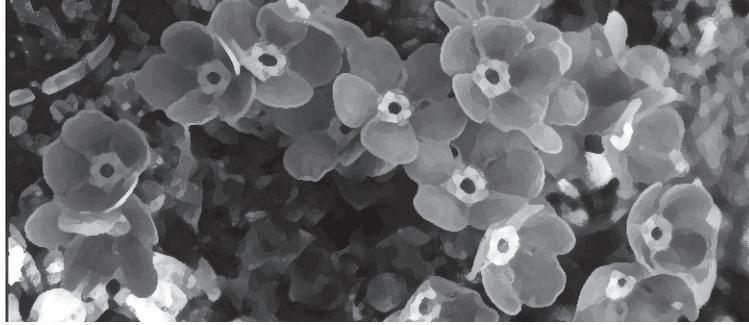




Common Plants



Alpine forget-me-not
Official park flower

Wildflowers color the Tetons as the snow melts. As the snow level gradually retreats up the mountain canyons, wildflowers of every color blossom, brightening valley then canyon. The diverse communities of the park give rise to different wildflowers at different times at different elevations throughout the summer. While valley flowers may have faded by July, blooms are just opening at the higher elevations. Learn more about the flowers and communities found here in Grand Teton National Park.

Growing Zones

Valley (6,400 - 7,000 feet)

Porous, rocky valley soils support plants able to tolerate warm, dry conditions. In addition to abundant sagebrush, numerous wildflowers and grasses grow. During June and July, a profusion of color enlivens the valley: yellow balsamroot, blue lupine, and red gilia. During August, sunflowers replace balsamroot.

Canyons (7,000 - 10,000 feet)

Between the crags of the Tetons, ice age glaciers carved deep canyons. Today, the canyons contain dense conifer forests and open meadows of

wildflowers. As elevation increases, wildflowers abound while trees become stunted and eventually shrub-like. “Krummholz” (German for “crooked wood”) plants are dwarfed forms that are treelike at lower elevations.

Alpine (above 10,000 feet)

Above treeline, plants adapt to wind, snow, and lack of soil by growing close to the ground. Alpine plants take advantage of a brief growing season by flowering soon after the snow melts. Some species grow only in the alpine area; others grow taller at lower elevations, but are dwarfed in the alpine.

Trees

Most of the trees in the park are conifers because of the short growing season. Conifers retain their leaves (needles) throughout the year and can produce food (photosynthesize) on warm spring days. Deciduous trees shed their leaves in the fall and grow new ones each spring before they can photosynthesize. Aspens and cottonwoods have chlorophyll in the bark and so they can photosynthesize before producing leaves.

Lodgepole pine, the most abundant conifer, grows on the lower mountain slopes and in well-drained glacial soils throughout the valley. Needles are 2-3 inches long, clustered in bundles of 2; cones are 1-2 inches long.

Douglas-fir, not a true fir, inhabits dry south- to east-facing slopes. Large diameter trees have coarse, furrowed bark. Needles are flat and 1 inch long; cones have a 3-pointed bract

Subalpine fir grows on wetter north-facing valley sites and at higher elevations. Smooth bark and spire-like growth identify subalpine fir. Needles are flat and 1 inch long. Cones are purple grow upright on branches.

Engelmann spruce occurs with subalpine fir. Rough bark and abundant cones hanging down from upper branches identify Engelmann spruce. Needles are sharp, four-sided and occur singly and cones are 1.5 inches long with papery scales.

Blue spruce lines rivers and creeks in the valley. Cones have papery scales and are twice as large as those found on Engelmann spruce. Spruce needles are sharp, four-sided, and occur singly.

Limber pines grow individually on open, dry valley sites. Needles grow in bundles of 5. Cones are 4-8 inches long.

Whitebark pine grows above 8,000 feet. Needles are in bundles of 5. Cones are purple and smaller than those of limber pine.

Aspen grows in stands on level, moist sites and on dry slopes. Aspen bark is smooth and greenish, cream-colored. Reproduction is primarily from shoots sprouting from horizontal roots.

Cottonwoods, close relatives of aspens, grow along rivers and creeks in the valley. Bark on mature trees is heavily furrowed. The species here hybridize freely so identification of individual species may be difficult.

Shrubs

Big sagebrush thrives in dry habitats and carpets most of the valley floor. Plants are one to five feet tall; leaves are grayish green. Tiny yellow flowers bloom in August.

Antelope bitterbrush occurs with sagebrush in the southern half of Jackson Hole. Bitterbrush grows to three feet tall. Cream-colored flowers bloom in June.

Huckleberry grows two to four feet tall in lodgepole pine forests in the valley and mountain canyons. Purple berries are produced in August.

Serviceberry grows to ten feet tall. Showy white flowers bloom in spring, producing purple berries by late summer.

Chokecherry grows to twenty feet tall. Cylindrical clusters of showy white flowers bloom

in spring, and turn to dark red berries by August.

Utah honeysuckle grows in open lodgepole pine forests. Leaves are opposite. Paired cream-colored flowers bloom in early June, producing red unpalatable berries.

Mountain ash grows as a tall shrub on lower mountain slopes. Flat-topped clusters of white flowers bloom in June. In fall, bright orange fruits complement vivid red compound leaves.

Willows occur in moist areas, especially along stream banks. Twenty species are found in the park and parkway.

Snowbrush ceanothus thrives in burned areas. Shiny, leathery leaves are retained through winter. Clusters of aromatic white flowers bloom in June.

White Flowers	Valley	Canyons	Alpine
Huckleberry _____	June _____	July	
Mountain ash _____	_____	July	
Birchleaf spirea _____	July _____	July	
Chokecherry _____	June		
Woodland star _____	June		
Richardson geranium _____	June–August _____	June–August	
Thimbleberry _____	_____	June–July	
Green gentian _____	June–July _____	July–mid August	
Snowbrush ceanothus _____	June–July		
Cow parsnip _____	late June–mid August _____	July–August	
Serviceberry _____	June		
American bistort _____	June _____	July _____	August
Ladies-tresses _____	August–September _____	August–September	
White bog-orchid _____	late June–mid August _____	July–August	
Manyflowered phlox _____	June–mid July _____	mid June–July	
Colorado columbine _____	_____	late June–August	
Marsh marigold _____	_____	June–mid July _____	June–July
Yampah _____	July–mid August _____	mid July–August	
Engelmann aster _____	_____	July–August	
Yarrow _____	July–early August _____	mid July–late August _____	August
Yellow Flowers			
Mules-ear wyethia _____	mid June–July		
Hymenoxys _____	_____	_____	July–August
Sunflower _____	mid July–August		
Arrowleaf balsamroot _____	June–mid July		
Rabbitbrush _____	June–mid July		
Heartleaf arnica _____	mid June–mid July _____	late June–late July	
Shrubby cinquefoil _____	June–September		
Yellow monkeyflower _____	June–mid July _____	late June–late July	
Lanceleaf stonecrop _____	June–August		
Glacier lily _____	_____	June–July _____	July
Western wallflower _____	_____	June–July	
Subalpine buttercup _____	_____	July–August	
Death camas _____	June _____	mid June–early August _____	mid July–August
Oregon grape _____	May–June		
Sulfur buckwheat _____	mid June–mid August		
Yellow columbine _____	late June–July _____	July–late August	
Yellow fritillary _____	mid May–mid June		
Butterweed groundsel _____	late July–September		
Pink – Red Flowers			
Spring beauty _____	May _____	June–mid July	
Sticky geranium _____	June–August		
Parry’s primrose _____	_____	July–August _____	August
Prairiesmoke _____	June–early July		
Globemallow _____	July–mid August _____	mid July–August	
Steer’s head _____	late May–mid June _____	late June–mid July	
Subalpine spirea _____	_____	mid July–late August	
Shooting star _____	June	late June–late August	
Lewis monkeyflower _____	_____	late June–August	
Mountain snowberry _____	June–July _____	July	
Spreading dogbane _____	July–August		
Mountain heather _____	_____	July–August _____	August–September
Fireweed _____	mid July–August		
Moss campion _____	_____	July–mid August	
Calypso orchid _____	June		
Elephant head _____	late June–July _____	mid July–August	
Indian paintbrush _____	June–July _____	July–August _____	mid July–early September
Striped coralroot _____	June–July		
Skyrocket gilia _____	mid June–July		
Blue – Purple Flowers			
Blue flax _____	July–August		
Rock clematis _____	June _____	July	
Sky pilot _____	_____	_____	July–August
Monkshood _____	late June–mid July _____	mid July–mid August	
Low larkspur _____	mid May–June		
Mountain bluebell _____	_____	mid July–early September	
Fringed gentian _____	late July–mid August _____	August–early September	
Harebell _____	mid June–early September		
Lupine _____	June–July		
Mountain bog gentian _____	_____	late July–early September	
Silky phacelia _____	late June–July _____	mid July–late August _____	late July–early September
Blue camas _____	June		
Alpine forget-me-not _____	_____	_____	July–early August