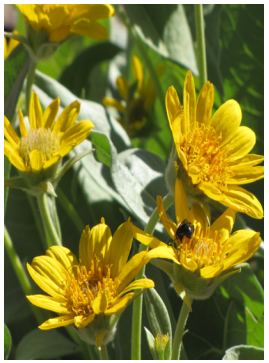
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lassen Volcanic National Park

Wildflower Guide

Lassen Volcanic National Park is home to more than 700 flowering plant species. With their bright colors and stunning variety, these transient expressions of beauty capture our attention and imagination.

Meadow

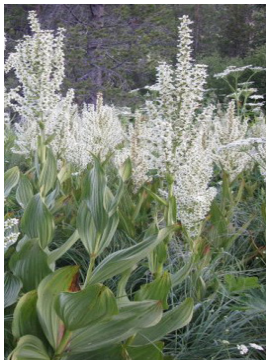


Mountain Mule Ears — June-August

Wyethia mollis

Mountain mule ears, a member of the sunflower family native to California, cover volcanic hillsides with yellow blooms. Its leaves grow vertically to help retain moisture.

Sulphur Works, Mill Creek Falls, Butte Lake



California Corn Lily — June-July

Veratrum californicum

This lily features large leaves and a tall stalk topped with white flowers. All parts of the plant are poisonous to humans and honeybees alike. American Indians used it to poison arrow tips.

Warner Valley, along Kings Creek

Forest

Snow Plant — May-June

Sarcodes sanguinea

Snow plant signals the start of spring, bursting forth from snow banks with crimson blooms. A saprophyte, snow plant derives its energy from nutrients created when fungus breaks down organic matter.

Reflection Lake, Hot Rock, Devil's Kitchen

Coyote Mint — July-September

Monardella odoratissima ssp. pallida

Look for butterflies alighting on coyote mint's pink, white or purple flower clusters. Also called pennyroyal, American Indians made a calming tea from its leaves.

Bumpass Hell, Hat Lake, Prospect Peak

Western Wallflower — June-August

Erysimum capitatum ssp. capitatum

The sunny colors of western wallflower jump from the main park road in early spring. Its name originates from a similar flower found on stone walls in Europe.

Sulphur Works, Summit and Twin lakes

Applegate's Indian Paintbrush — June-August

Castilleja applegatei ssp. pinetorum

American Indians painted with the red flowers of these plants. Paintbrushes are parasites, attaching their roots to the roots of host plants in order to obtain nutrients.

Sulphur Works, Manzanita Lake

Rocky

Silverleaf Lupine — July-September
Lupinus obtusilobus

After its purple flowers fade, this lupine is recognizable by silver hairs covering its slender, palm-shaped leaves. Bacteria cling to its roots and help supply the plant's energy by fertilizing the soil.

Mt. Harkness, Devastated Area

Pussy Paws — June-September
Calyptridium umbellatum

The flowers of this plant resemble the pink pads of cat paws. As the day warms, the stems rise, moving the flowers away from the hot ground. When the temperature cools, the stems lower.

Hat Lake, Mt. Harkness, Warner Valley

Davis' Knotweed — July-September
Polygonum davisiae

Look for small white flowers nestled within triangular leaves. In fall, its stems and leaves turn red. Davis' knotweed is found in soil compacted by human travel. Its long taproot enables it to tolerate drought.

Lake Helen, Bumpass Hell, Lassen Peak

Crimson Columbine — June-July
Aquilegia formosa

Hummingbirds pollinate these showy flowers. The five red petals taper to yellow-tipped spurs emblematic of eagle talons, hence the name *aquilegia*, derived from the Latin for eagle. American Indians boiled its young leaves and made a candy from its nectar.

Dersch Meadows, Paradise Meadows

Riparian

Alpine Shooting Star — May-August
Dodecatheon alpinum

Four lavender petals bend sharply backward towards a maroon, leafless stem. *Dodecatheon* means "12 gods," in reference to the 12 ancient Greek gods living atop Mt. Olympus. The way the flowers hang close to each other was likened to a meeting of these deities.

Emerald Lake, Paradise Meadows

Leopard Lilly — July-August
Lilium pardalinum ssp. shastense

The leopard lily is named for the maroon spots dotting its orange petals. The bulbs were baked or steamed by the local Atsugewi and Yana American Indian tribes. Some American Indians continue to eat the bulbs today.

Bluff Falls, Crumbaugh Lake

Please Leave Wildflowers for Others to Enjoy. It is unlawful to remove natural items from National Parks.

For more information on wildflowers in Lassen Volcanic, please visit the Lassen Association bookstore at Loomis Museum or the Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center.