

Montana Wildflowers

Prairie Rose



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Prairie Rose FACTS

- Belongs to the ROSE FAMILY that has 5 Petals
- Look for ROSE HIPS – the dried berries that remain on the shrub through winter
- These rose hips are a high source of Vitamin C
- During World War II, when oranges were in short supply, English parents created a National Rosehip syrup so that their children could stay healthy

Indian Paint Brush



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Indian Paint Brush FACTS

- Is a member of the FIGWORT Family
- The top of the flower looks like it has been dipped in bright red paint
- This plant is SEMI-PARASITIC, because it feeds off the water and nutrients of underground roots of nearby plants.
- Other paint brush colors are orange, yellow, pink and white!

Harebell



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Harebell FACTS

- Member of the BELLFLOWER Family
- Harebell is a PERENNIAL, which means it grows for two years
- The flowers of the Harebell produce large quantities of nectar which attracts bumblebees and bees, the main pollinators of the plant
- In olden days, Harebell flowers were used to create a blue dye used for coloring tartans (a Scottish woven fabric)

Quaking Aspen



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Quaking Aspen FACTS

- Member of the Populus tree genus- includes Poplar and Cottonwood trees
- Above ground, aspen trees can live for 150 years; underground the roots create a clone system that can live for thousands of years!
- Quaking aspen is an important food source for many animals: beaver eat bark, twig, leaves; moose, elk and deer consume young shoots; rabbits, hares and muskrats consume bark; songbirds eat seeds, flower buds and fruits.

Fireweed



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Fireweed FACTS

- Member of the EVENING PRIMROSE Family
- Fireweed gets its name from its ability to rapidly colonize areas burned from wildfire
- Another name for Fireweed is Willowherb
- Fireweed blooms from the bottom UP- and in Alaska, it is said that when the top flowers, it's only 6 weeks until winter!

Douglas Fir



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Douglas Fir FACTS

- Douglas Fir is not a true fir – it is named after a botanist, David Douglas and its cataloger, Archibald Menzies
- Douglas Fir is one of the world's most valuable and important timber trees
- Its cones have bracts that look like little mouse tails coming out of the cone
- The Douglas Fir tree can grow in shade conditions and outcompetes other trees for sunlight

Wild Strawberries



Wild Strawberry FACTS

- The Wild Strawberry is a member of the ROSE family and has 5 petals
- Runners are vertical stems that grow at the soil surface and where new plants bud - this is the main way wild strawberry plants spread
- The fruits of the wild strawberry plant are actually the seed-like structures in the red berry we eat
- Tea from the wild strawberry's dried leaves is used to cure dysentery

Mountain Lady Slipper



Mountain Lady Slipper FACTS

- Mountain Lady Slipper is a member of the ORCHID family
- Orchids grow showy flowers that attract very specific pollinators- small to medium-sized bees pollinate the Mountain Lady Slipper
- Mountain Lady Slipper plants are very sensitive and rarely survive being transplanted
- Mountain Lady Slippers grow in ecosystems that have been shaped by wildfire

PRAIRIE CROCUS



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Prairie Crocus FACTS

- Prairie Crocus is part of the BUTTERCUP family
- Another name for Prairie Crocus is Pasqueflower
- The Prairie Crocus has a furry stem and after it blooms, what is left is a fluffy seed head with long filaments blowing in the breeze
- Prairie Crocus are some of the first flowers to establish themselves in new areas after a wildfire

Buffalo Berry



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Buffalo Berry FACTS

- Buffalo Berry is a thorny shrub that provides habitat for many songbirds
- A delicious frothy drink can be made from the berries and added sweeteners
- The hardy shrub is useful as a wind break
- The plant has silvery leaves and tart red fruits

Forget-Me-Not



Forget-me-not FACTS

- The Forget-me-not is part of the genus *Myosotis* which means “mouse ear” – its leaves reminded early botanists of a mouse’s ear!
- Forget-me-nots grow in sunny areas
- The Forget-me-not is the state flower of Alaska
- Forget-me-not flowers are very fragrant in the evening and night-time

Bitterroot



Bitterroot Flower FACTS

- The Bitterroot is the state flower of MONTANA
- Bitterroot grows in full sunlight and sandy soil
- The plant grows best by seed
- Bitterroot has great cultural significance to many Montana tribes who gather the roots to dry for food or trade
- As the name suggests, the root is bitter and is often cooked and mixed with meat or berries

Indian Blanket



Indian Blanket Flower FACTS

- Indian Blanket Flower belongs to the SUNFLOWER family
- This flower does well in full sunlight in a hot, dry climate
- Honeybees pollinate the blanket flower and produce a dark reddish amber, buttery-tasting honey
- The Indian Blanket Flower produces many seeds

SHOOTING STARS



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Shooting Star Flower FACTS

- Shooting stars look like meteors falling to earth
- A frequent pollinator of the Shooting Star are Queen Bumblebees, because of the flower's unique shape
- The Shooting Star belongs to the genus, DODECATHEON, which means "flower of the 12 gods"
- Shooting Stars smell like root beer when they are in bloom!