

Wildflower List

Mores Mountain Trails

Shafer Butte Recreation Area



lupine

The plants and animals living on Mores Mountain today are the product of a slow and continuing process. This dynamic “ecosystem” contains a broad range of plant species - over 200 near the trail alone! Large and small animals; fungi - some tasty, some toxic and some very exotic; lichens on the soil, rocks and trees; and much more!

Getting There:

To reach the Shafer Butte Recreation area and the Mores Mountain trails, drive 16 miles from Boise to Bogus Basin Ski Area. Continue past the lodge on the dirt road for 3.6 miles. Look for the direction sign for Shafer Butte and turn right. Continue another 1.7 miles to the recreation area and the trailhead for the Mores Mountain trails. There is a small parking lot at the trailhead.

Mores Mountain Trails

There are 3 trail options that start at the same trailhead: a one-mile self-guided interpretive loop; a two-mile loop; and a one mile extension off the two-mile loop that circles Mores Mountain.

All trails are for foot travel only.

Early Season Wildflowers (June)

Yellow Flowers

- ❑ **Biscuitroot** (*Lomatium* species) Growing one to two feet tall, these yellow-flowered plants have aromatic carrot-like foliage.
- ❑ **Columbine** (*Aquilegia formosa*) The familiar yellow and red columbines are found in shaded areas.
- ❑ **Goosefoot violet** (*Viola purpurea*) These small, yellow violets have leaves that look like, you guessed it, goose foot-prints.
- ❑ **Yellow bells** (*Fritillaria pudica*) These short, nodding bright yellow lilies are usually found on south facing slopes.

White and Pink Flowers

- ❑ **Dwarf onion** (*Allium simillimum*) This very small, white-flowered onion has flowers at or near the ground surface. The distinctive onion aroma emanates from both leaves and flowers.
- ❑ **False Solomon's seal** (*Smilacina racemosa*) This plant is usually found in areas with moist soil. It stands two to three feet tall and has gracefully arching single stems, each tipped with sprays of white six-petal flowers.
- ❑ **Serviceberry** (*Amelanchier alnifolia*) A shrub with few branches but large white five-petal flowers. Its small, blue, apple-like fruits are favorites of the local birds and small animals.



spring beauty

- ❑ **Springbeauty** (*Claytonia lanceolata*) These small, open-ground plants have white flowers and narrow, strap-like leaves.
- ❑ **Turkey peas** (*Orogenia linearifolia*) This small, low-growing member of the carrot family has tiny salt and peppered flowers in clusters at or near the soil surface.
- ❑ **Wax currant** (*Ribes cereum*) A modest-sized shrub with pale cream-colored flowers and gooseberry-like leaves.

Blue and Purple Flowers

- ❑ **Ball-head waterleaf** (*Hydrophyllum capitatum*) This species of waterleaf is short and most often found in the shade of shrubs. The clusters of light lavender flowers are about Ping-Pong ball sized and usually hidden beneath the leaves.

*Flowering times will vary from year to year because of weather conditions.

Mid Season Wildflowers (July)

Yellow Flowers

- ❑ **Cinquefoil** (*Potentilla* species) This short, bright yellow flowered herb is common in the meadow near the trailhead.
- ❑ **Stonecrop** (*Sedum lenceolatum*) Stonecrops are succulent plants with bright yellow flowers. They are common on the rock outcrops at the western side of the trail.
- ❑ **Woolly sunflower** (*Eriophyllum lanatum*) A short wildflower with hairy leaves and egg-yolk yellow flowers. It is most often seen in scattered clumps on hot south facing slopes and in open areas along the trail.

White Flowers

- ❑ **Chokecherry** (*Prunus virginiana*) A small shrub with long sprays of white flowers. Its cousin, bittercherry, is very similar but flowers in short clusters of somewhat smaller blossoms.
- ❑ **Sego lily** (*Calochortus species*) A large-flowered lily with white petals, each with a maroon spot. It was an important food item for Native Americans. Sego lilies are usually less than two feet tall and rarely have more than six flowers per stem.

Pink and Red Flowers

- ❑ **Dwarf monkeyflower** (*Mimulus nanus*) This tiny, red flowering annual is common on bare soils and ant hills. The flowers of dwarf monkeyflower resemble very small snap-dragons.
- ❑ **Scarlet gilia** (*Ipomopsis aggregata*) This 2-3 foot tall biennial has bright scarlet tubular flowers that are much favored by hummingbirds. The early flowering stems of this plant are delicacies to deer and elk.
- ❑ **Staghorn clarkia** (*Clarkia pulchella*) This annual has pink flowers with distinctively forked, antler-like petals.
- ❑ **Sticky geranium** (*Geranium viscosissimum*) Very aromatic and sticky to the touch, wild geraniums are easy to recognize as they closely resemble cultivated varieties. The flowers of sticky geranium are light pink to dark magenta.

Blue and Purple Flowers

- ❑ **Horsemint** (*Agastache urticifolia*) grows up to 5 feet! This lavender flowered mint has an unmistakable smell. Horsemint is very common along the trail and is much loved by bumble bees.
- ❑ **Silky Lupine** (*Lupinus sericeus*) – A member of the pea family, silky lupine has clusters of blue to lavender flowers shaped like those of the garden sweet pea. Although the seed pods may look edible, they are

actually toxic. In mid-summer, thousands of silky lupine flowers create a spectacular display in meadows near the top of Mores Mountain.

- **Penstemon** (*Penstemon* species) There are several kind of penstemons along the trail. Most are less than two feet tall and have blue to purple snapdragon-like flowers. A white flowered species, hotrock penstemon, is common along the last stretch of dirt road before the picnic area.
- **Phacelia** (*Phacelia* species) Phacelias are short-lived perennials with silky leaves and light lavender flowers on coiled (scorpioid) flower stems. Phacelias are closely related to the ballhead waterleaf.

Late Season (August and later)

Yellow Flowers

- **Greene's goldenweed** (*Haplopappus greenei*) A small shrub with rich green leaves often found in rocky, open areas. Its bright yellow flowers can completely cover the plant in favorable years.
- **Indian Paintbrush** (*Castilleja* species) These plants derive their bright colors from specialized leaves called 'bracts'. The flowers themselves are inconspicuous. Indian paintbrush comes in yellows, oranges, pinks and reds.
- **Mountain sunflower** (*Helianthella uniflora*) Two to three feet tall, these bright yellow sunflowers are easy to recognize.

White Flowers

- **Ballhead sandwort** (*Arenaria congesta*) This very short prickly-leaved plant produces tight clusters of white flowers. It is common on the rocky outcrops at the western end of the trail system.
- **Ground smoke** (*Gayophytum diffusum*) Small white flowers in diffuse sprays make the common name of this wildflower very descriptive. This plant is usually found in full sun on south facing slopes and can flower from July to mid-October.
- **Yarrow** (*Achillea millefolium*) This common relative of the garden yarrow with flat-topped clusters of white flowers, blooms from late June through October here. Its pungent, ferny foliage can be used to make a medicinal tea.



yarrow

Tread lightly and please don't pick the flowers - if left alone they will reproduce and continue to grace this area for the enjoyment of all.

Other Stuff

- **Stinging Nettle** (*Urtica dioica*) – Stinging nettle plants are often found together with horsemint along portions of the trail. Plants can grow to be over 6 feet tall! Needle-like hairs on the leaves and stems are irritating to human skin. Although sometimes considered a “nuisance” plant, stinging nettle has been used medicinally around the world for centuries.
- **Aspen** (*Populus tremuloides*) These white-barked trees grow in isolated groves where the soil is consistently moist. Wind blowing through their round leaves causes them to “quake”, hence the nickname “quaking aspen”. In autumn, aspens splash the hills with a brilliant golden color.
- **Mountain ash** (*Sorbus scopulina*) This short shrubby tree grows under the protective branches of the Douglas-fir trees. Early spring flowers produce bright red berries in the fall. As the season turns cold, the narrow leaflets warm to cheery reds and yellows.
- **Ponderosa pine** (*Pinus ponderosa*) These trees have the long needles in groups of three. The cones are base-ball sized and woody. You will see a few ponderosa pines at the view points overlooking the Boise Valley.
- **Douglas-fir** (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) This is a dominant tree in this area. They have short, single needles and small papery cones.
- **Mosses** of many species can be found growing on the rocks, soil and trees along the trail. Contrary to popular belief, these lowly plants are not restricted to swamps and marshes. In dry areas like Mores Mountain, mosses go dormant in summer and come eagerly back-to-life in the spring and fall when the weather is cool and damp.
- **Dwarf mistletoe** (*Arceuthobium* species) These small parasitic plants are sapping food from the Douglas-fir trees. Their shoots are very small and difficult to see.

Did you know?

- Mores Mountain was named for J. Marion More, one of the first miners to discover gold in the Boise Basin in the 1860s.
- Mores Mountain was formed 70 million years ago and is part of the Idaho batholith - a gigantic block of granite dominating the geology of central Idaho. Since its formation, Mores Mountain has been shaped by glacial ice, wind, and the cutting action of water.
- The two mile loop trail was built by the Beaver Creek Youth Conservation Corps in 1971; it was reconstructed in 1988.

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