

# Wildflowers and Weeds of the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness

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USDA Forest Service  
Intermountain Region  
Uinta National Forest



Utah Native  
Plant Society

Uinta Visitor  
Information  
Association

## Introduction

Welcome to the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness! This unique land is protected to maintain its integrity and natural beauty. Many attractions like wildlife, lakes, waterfalls, and wildflowers attract visitors. While hiking the Mount Timpanogos and Timpooneke trails, you will experience spectacular vistas and the incredible beauty of high alpine meadows. As you walk along the trail, you will also see changes in vegetation. Aspen, Douglas fir and Subalpine fir forests are established below the timberline, which transition to alpine meadows at about 8,000 feet elevation. Aspen stands, which are found at lower elevations, provide excellent habitat for grasses and wildflowers. Some flowers to look for in aspen stands are columbines, bluebells, arnicas, larkspurs, and geraniums.

Douglas fir/subalpine fir stands usually occupy steep north facing slopes, with Douglas firs established at the lower end of these conifer forests. Common wildflowers in and around these forests are columbines, Indian paintbrushes, yarrows, leafy Jacobs' ladder, and sulfur buckwheat.

Alpine ecosystems have high watershed and scenic values; they are fragile and recover slowly from disturbances. Many rare and endemic plants are also found in this landscape.

The best places to see wildflowers are Timpanogos Basin and Hidden Lakes. During late summer these meadows explode with a profusion of colorful wildflowers. Among them are bluebells, Indian paintbrushes, larkspurs, lupines, yarrows, and sulfur buckwheats. Mid-July through mid-September is excellent time for viewing wildflowers.

There are countless wildflowers in the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness. Use this brochure to identify the most abundant and commonly seen on the Mount Timpanogos and Timpooneke trails, and throughout the wilderness area.

Other plants found at the base of the wilderness and along the trails are actually weeds. These unwanted weeds are entering the wilderness by humans and domestic animals. In this brochure, you will find information on some of the most common ones found in the area and tips to prevent their dispersal.



# Common Wildflowers of Timpanogos Wilderness

**Mountain columbine,** *Aquilegia caerulea*, grows in aspen, Douglas fir-white fir and spruce forests. This beautiful flower has pale to purplish blue sepals and blue to white petals that extend backwards into eagle talon-like spurs. Leaves are compound with 3 lacy-lobed leaflets.



April Sorensen

**Yellow columbine, Aquilegia flavescens**, grows in moist areas or riparian sites in aspen, Douglas fir-white fir and spruce forests. Flowers of yellow columbine are similar to mountain columbine, but smaller. Its eagle talon-like spurs are also smaller. Leaves are compound with 3 lacy-lobed leaflets.



Alpine Wildflowers, D. Strickler

**Mountain bluebell,** *Mertensia ciliata*, grows along alpine/subalpine streams, where they form large, dense colonies with thousands of drooping bells. Flower color varies from a light blue to purple or very light pink depending on how long the flowers have been opened. Many animals enjoy the lance-shape leaves and succulent stems.



April Sorensen

**Wavy-leaf Indian paintbrush, Castilleja applegatei**, grows in dry mountain ridges, unstable rocky slopes, alpine meadows, and conifer forests. The inflorescence (cluster of flowers) is a dense spike of vivid, scarlet, leafy bracts. These showy bracts hide small tubular flowers.



April Sorensen

Leaves are alternate, wavy-margined, and covered with sticky hairs. The upper leaves have lateral lobes.



**Royal Indian paintbrush, Castilleja rhexifolia**, is found in alpine/subalpine meadows, slopes and open aspen-conifer forests, growing in moist or shady areas. Flowers are arranged in a spike with vibrant purple to crimson leafy bracts and inconspicuous flowers. Leaves are broad to lance-shaped with entire margins (see drawing); hairy but without sticky hairs.

**Pale yellow Indian paintbrush, Castilleja rhexifolia var. sulphurea**, grows in alpine/subalpine meadows, slopes, and in openings of aspen-conifer forests. Leaves are lance-shape, sometimes lobed. This, as well as other paintbrushes, is a partial parasite of sage-brush and grasses, attaching to their roots to obtain water and nutrients. Hence they are difficult to cultivate.



April Sorensen

**Milfoil yarrow, *Achillea millefolium***, is found in aspen, spruce-fir, and alpine tundra communities. Flower heads are in a flat branching cluster with numerous small and whitish flowers. Leaves are alternate, finely divided (fern-like) and covered with woolly hairs.



April Sorensen



**Tall larkspur, *Delphinium occidentale***, grows in alpine meadows, aspen stands, conifer forests, and moist sites. Its intense blue-purple flowers are arranged alternately along the upper stem. The upper sepal of the flower extends back and upward into a long, tubular spur. The stems are hollow and the leaves are

palmate (arranged like the fingers on a hand) with lobed or divided blades.

**Lupine, *Lupinus argenteus***, grows in dense colorful clumps in the Timpanogos basin, mainly in alpine meadows. This plant is an associate to mountain blue-bell and Indian paintbrush. Flowers are blue to purple and pea-like shape. Fruit is a hairy pod. Each leaf has 6-9 leaflets radiating from a common point (palmately compound).



**Seep-spring arnica, *Arnica longifolia***, grows in unstable rocky slopes and streambanks in aspen and conifer forests. This plant has 1 to 9 beautiful bright yellow sunflowers per stem, and around 8-13 petals (ray flower) per flower head. The lower leaves are opposite and lance-shape, covered with short soft hairs. It is a common associate to lupines, blue bells and paintbrushes.



**Sulfur buckwheat, *Eriogonum umbellatum***, grows in various habitats, open rocky slopes, sagebrush, and subalpine conifer forests openings. There are several varieties but



typical characteristics are the rosette-like basal leaves and minute yellow flowers arranged in an umbel inflorescence (see drawing). Another typical feature of this plant is the numerous

small leaves growing close to the ground forming a mat. The flowering stalks can reach 10 to 14 inches high.

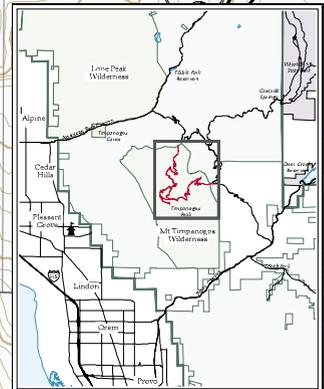
**American bistort, *Polygonum bistortoides***, grows in subalpine meadows, moist areas, and streambanks. The spike inflorescence is a dense cluster of small white flowers with long stamens. Other characteristics are the lance-shape basal leaves and erect flowering stems that reach up to 20 inches high. The root is thick, twisted, and snakelike and has been used by Native Americans in soups and stews.



April Sorensen

Utah Wildflowers, R. Shaw

# Mount Timpanogos Wilderness Trails



Woolly Hole

Scout Falls  
Giant Staircase

Pika Cirque

## Mt Timpanogos Wilderness

Timpanogos Basin

Roberts Horn  
10,993ft

Primrose Cirque

Mt. Timpanogos Trailhead

Elk Point

Emerald Lake

Hidden Lakes

Timpanogos Peak  
11,750ft

Cascade Cirque

### Legend

- Uinta National Forest
  - State Park
  - National Park Service
  - Wilderness Area
  - Timpanogos Wilderness Trails
  - District Ranger Office
- Contour = 40ft



Original data assembled from multiple sources. Data accuracy not warranted. The U.S. National Mapping Agency, the National Office of Management and Budget, and the U.S. Census Bureau are the primary sources for the data. Information contact the Forest Service, Utah National Forest System, Salt Lake City, Utah. This map is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used for navigation or other purposes.



**Sticky geranium, *Geranium viscosissimum***, grows in open conifer and aspen forests, sagebrush, and meadows. Its

5-petaled flowers are pink to lavender. The purplish lines found on petals help insects find the nectar at the base of the flower.

Richardson's geranium, *Geranium richardsonii*, is also very similar, but with white flowers and reddish lines.

Utah Wildflowers,  
R. Shaw



**Wasatch beardtongue, *Penstemon cyananthus***, grows in open areas along the Timpooneke trail. Its intense and bright blue flowers are tubular and bellied below to favor bumblebee pollination. This flower has 5 stamens, 4 fertile and 1 infertile. The infertile stamen is flattened, tongue-like and bearded with golden hairs, leaves are opposite.



April Sorensen



April Sorensen

**Leafy Jacobs Ladder, *Polemonium foliosissimum***, is common along streams and high meadows. Flowers are arranged in a raceme inflorescence (see drawing). The bell-shaped flowers have white to blue lobes and large anthers with conspicuous bright yellow pollen. Leaves are light green, divided to pinnately compound. Soft and sticky hairs are found on stems, leaves and sepals.



Utah Wildflowers, R. Shaw

## Tips for Wildflower Viewing

- ◆ Plants need their flowers to produce seeds. Picking wildflowers can affect the abundance of native plants in the meadows.
- ◆ Enjoy wildflowers and leave them for someone else to enjoy!
- ◆ Respect their natural environment. Staying on trails will minimize disturbance to wildflowers.
- ◆ Admire wildflowers. Take their beauty home in a photograph, a drawing and in your memories!
- ◆ Many wildflowers do not survive outside their natural environment. Please help us protect them by leaving them untouched.

## Tips to Prevent Spreading Weeds

- ◆ Staying on trails will help prevent seeds from attaching to clothes and pets – lessening their spread into the wilderness and wildflower basins.
- ◆ Using weed free-hay will reduce weeds from spreading to the wilderness.
- ◆ Not all beautiful flowers are wildflowers; in fact some are invasive weeds!
- ◆ Picking and transporting wildflowers you can't identify increases the chances for weed dispersal.

**Help us in the fight against weeds!!**

# Common Weeds Found on the Wilderness Trails

**Houndstongue, *Cynoglossum officinale***, is an alien from Europe. It thrives along trails, pastures, and rangelands. The first year this plant grows to a wide rosette with long basal leaves. The second year, the plant develops long flowering stems, reaching up to 4 feet tall. Dull reddish-purple flowers develop at the top of the flowering stems. Each flower produces 4 triangular seeds that are covered with hooked prickles. Seeds are easily spread by attaching to clothing and animals. They contain toxic alkaloids that can cause liver damage in animals and humans.



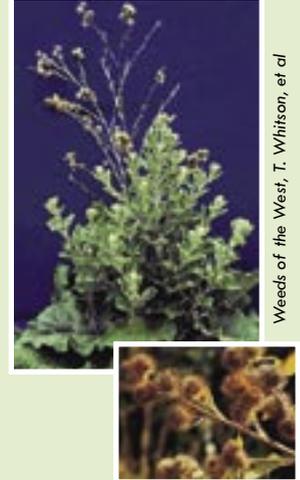
Weeds of the West, T. Whitson, et al

**Dalmatian toadflax, *Linaria dalmatica***, is a native to the Mediterranean region of Europe introduced to the western U.S. as an ornamental about 1874. Since then it has become a widespread noxious weed. This plant can be recognized by its 2-lipped yellow flowers, which contain a long spur (similar to snapdragon flowers). It also has entire broad leaves with a blue-green color that clasp the stems in alternate fashion. It is very aggressive and hard to control due to its extensive deep root system and thick waxy leaf cuticle. This weed's beautiful flowers can be mistaken for a native flower.



April Sorensen

**Common burdock, *Arctium minus***, is a biennial native to Europe that is now established throughout the U.S. mainly along roadsides, pastures, and waste areas. It is found at the entrance of the Timponeke trail. The first year this plant is only a basal rosette with big heart-shaped leaves. The second year it develops tall flowering stems. Flowers are purple and numerous, covered with slender hooked spines. Fruits contain several spiny burs that become entangled in the hair of animals and on people's clothing allowing seeds to be distributed to new areas. Attempts to remove the fruit will break the seeds apart.



Weeds of the West, T. Whitson, et al

This scenic area at Mount Timpanogos displays a blend of beautiful arnicas and the menacing dalmatian toadflax.



Mei Lewis

***If you have questions or concerns about weeds in your area, please contact one of the agencies listed in the back of this brochure.***

# Drawings

## LEAF MARGINS



Entire Leaf



Lobed Leaf



Divided Leaf

## OTHER LEAF AND FLOWER TERMS



Basal Leaves



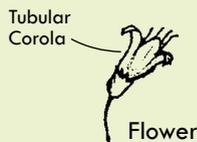
Opposite Leaves



Alternate Leaves



Palmately Compound Leaf



Flower



Raceme Inflorescence



Spike Inflorescence



Umbel Inflorescence

# Contacts

## Uinta National Forest

Supervisor's Office  
88 West 100 North  
Provo, UT 84601  
Phone: (801) 342-5100

## Pleasant Grove Ranger District

390 North 100 East  
Pleasant Grove, UT 84062  
Phone: (801) 785-3563

## Intermountain Region

Regional Office  
324 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Ogden, UT 84401  
Phone: (801) 625-5202

## Utah County Weed Control Office

2855 South State Street  
Provo, UT 84606  
Phone: (801) 370-8638

## Salt Lake County Weed Control Office

7125 S 600 W  
Midvale, UT 84047  
Phone: (801) 562-6466

## Wasatch County Weed Control Office

805 W 100 S  
P.O. Box 69  
Heber City, UT 84032  
Phone: (435) 654-1661

## Utah Native Plant Society (UNPS)

Contact us at: [unps@unps.org](mailto:unps@unps.org)  
Web site: [www.unps.org](http://www.unps.org)