



Garden of the Month

APRIL

THE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

Spring comes early to the Native Plant garden. With our Mediterranean climate of wet winters and dry summers, most of our native flowers bloom in spring and are dormant by July. The blossoms of June plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*) (1), gummy gooseberry (*Ribes lobbii*) (2) and satin flower (*Olsynium douglasii*) (3) have been and gone.

Now the second wave of bloom is underway, with fawn lilies (*Erythronium oregonum*, *E. revolutum*) (4), camas (*Camassia quamash*, *C. leichtlinii*) (5), chocolate lilies (*Fritillaria affinis*) (6), sea blush (*Plectritis congesta*) (7), shooting star (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*) (8), skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanum*) (9) and red-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguinum*) (10) in flower. Trillium (*Trillium ovatum*) (11) and coast penstemon (*Penstemon serrulatus*) (12) will soon emerge.



THE GARRY OAK MEADOW FLOWER GARDEN

You are welcome to visit the Garry Oak Meadow Flower Garden, located down the hill above the lake, framed by the large Douglas Fir trees and the great lawn. This ethnobotanical garden is a loop of the larger W̱SÁNEĆ Ethnobotanical Trail, you could follow the trail signs or just wander past the round Gathering Place to find it. All the plants species in this garden are native to this area and represent the Garry oak ecosystem. Most of them have medicinal, food or technological values.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF



Garden of the Month

THE GARRY OAK MEADOW FLOWER GARDEN (CONTINUED)

Just as we pass the Spring Equinox and the Spring season begins, the Garry oak Meadow Flower Garden wakes up. The longer days and warming soil encourage the many bulbs, tubers and buds to send out their fresh green shoots. Early in April look for bright pink flowers of Broad-leaved Shooting star (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*)(1) and the fragile purple beauty of the Satin flowers (*Sisyrinchium douglasii*)(2). Along the edge of the meadow closer to the forest, the shrubs are flowering with a promise of berries later in the season. The blushing Red-flowering current *Ribes sanguinum*)(3) is putting on a display of clustered deep pink flowers and the yellow blooms of the Tall Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*)(4) sit above glossy new leaf growth. In the shade of the forest huckleberry plants (*Vaccinium parvifolium*, *V. ovatum*)(5) are covered with small bell shaped white to pink flowers. The crook limbed Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*)(6) saplings are bursting with deeply lobed fresh greenish yellow leaves. As April progresses in the meadow, the strong green camas shoots (*Camassia quamash*, *C. leichtlinii*) grow stronger, until the beautiful tall stocks of royal blue flowers spiked with yellow from their centre stand tall in the meadow. Alongside the meadow, the saucy Red columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*)(7) float on tall stems attracting hummingbirds and butterflies. The tiny pink clusters of nodding onion (*Allium cernuum*)(8) wave above green leaves in the rocky outcrop area off the centre pathway. The ground in the lower area is blanketed with the crisp white blooms of Coastal strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*)(9) and a volunteer *Arbutus* (*Arbutus menziesii*)(10) shows off its smooth orange bark. Look for the fawn lilies (*Erythronium oregonum*) with their bright white petaled flowers and yellow centres above their mottled green leaves clustered in the shadier areas. Closer to the ground other herbs are flushing with strong green new growth and will soon offer berries and roots for medicinal use; look for Yerba buena, Hooker's Fairybells (*Disporum hookeri*)(11), False Lily-of-the-Valley (*Maianthemum dilatatum*)(12) and False Soloman's-seal (*Smilacina racemosa*).

Through the Spring, Summer and Fall this Garry oak ecosystem and related plants continue to grow and offer their fruits to the birds, insects, small mammals and amphibians who also live here. Visit again later this year to see all the seasonal changes in this active community.



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