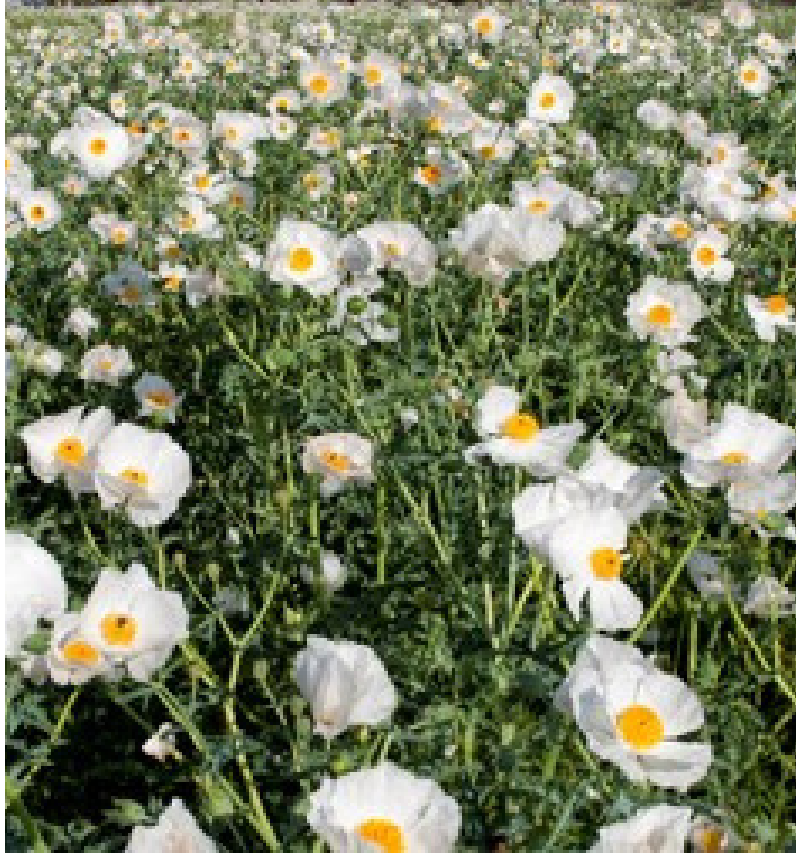


Urban Prairies Flowering Plant Field Guide

BY KATIE CHRISTENSEN

BUTTERFLY PAVILION



Restoration is “a commitment to the recreation of an entire community of plants and animals modeled strictly on one that occurs naturally”

YARROW



Achillea lanulosa

Asteraceae

- Ovate to round ray and disk flowers
- White to pale pink
- Large flat clusters at the top of the stems
- Alternate leaves
- Fern like leaves with a distinctive smell, similar to sage
- Soft, velvety, pubescence on leaves
- Leaves arranged in spirals on stems
- One to several erect stems
- Can reach up to 3' in height
- Flowers from May to July
- Cavity nesting birds, such as starlings, use yarrow to line their nests
- Several types of insects feed on yarrow



Common Location:

Disturbed soils and areas of erosion

SEEK OUT: Velvety soft, pale green leaves or white clusters

LEADPLANT



Amorpha fruticosa

Fabaceae

- Purple to dark purple flowers with yellow stamen that extend beyond a single petal
- Flowers make spike like clusters at the ends of branches
- Velvety leaves that are parallel and rounded at the tips
- Leggy in nature making it an airy shrub
- Grows 6-10' tall and in dense thickets
- Blooms April to June
- Attracts several Nectar species
- Larval host for California & southern dogfaces, Silver-spotted Skipper, Gray hairstreak, Hoary edge skipper



Common Location:

Stream and pond edges, gravel bars, open woods, roadsides and canyons

SEEK OUT: Deep purple flowers with orange

DOGBANE

Apocynum cannabinum

Apocynaceae

- Small-colored flowers are clustered at branch ends
- Long opposite, oval leaves with a white coating
- Strong, erect, purplish stems with branches ascending from the upper part
- Tufted seeds form in spindle-shaped pods.
- Grows 3-4' tall
- Blooms May to August
- Larval host for the snowberry clearwing and hummingbird clearwing moths
- Adult food for Painted Lady butterflies
- **POISONOUS**

Common Location:

Open wooded areas, ditches and hillsides, near streams in shady or moist places



SEEK OUT: Tall plant with purple stems

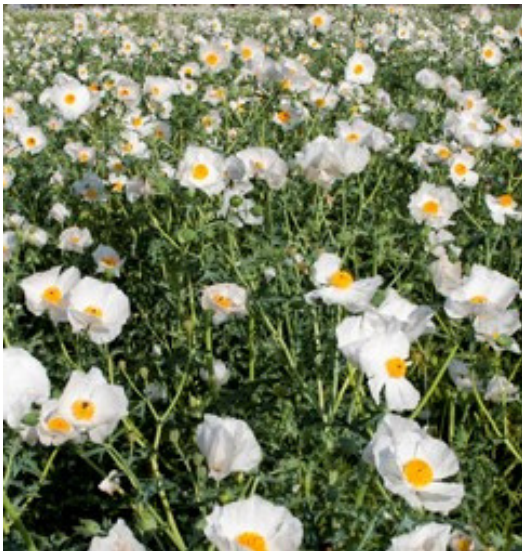
PRICKLY POPPY



Argemone
polyanthemos

Papaveraceae

- Paper thin white or yellow petals with bright yellow center
- Flowers grow up to 5" wide
- Pale green lobed, spiky leaves
- Prickles on the stems and leaves
- Grows up to 3' tall
- Blooms April to October
- Propagates by seed
- Attracts bees, butterflies and beetles
- **ALL PARTS POISONOUS**



Common Location:

Prairie, plains, meadows, pastures, disturbed areas and savannahs

SEEK OUT: Cup shaped white delicate flowers

SHOWY MILKWEED



Asclepias speciosa

Apocynaceae

- Purplish-rose and white flowers in star shaped large clusters
- Broad, long leaves, up to 12" long that are widely spaced
- Tall sturdy stems
- Milky sap
- Grows up to 5' tall
- Seed pods in late summer and fall are large, white and up to 4" long, covered in tiny spines
- Blooms May to September
- Sole support for monarch butterflies



Common Location:

Sunny and dry to moist areas in savannahs, prairies, road-sides, old fields, and meadows.

SEEK OUT: Star shaped clusters or large seed pods

OX-EYE DAISY



Borrchia frutescens

Asteraceae

- Bright yellow daisy like flowers with 15-30 rays
- Oval gray-green leaves that are hairy on both sides
- Grows up to 3' tall
- Blooms from July to August
- Attracts butterflies, bees, leafhoppers and aphids

Common Location:

Marshes, tidal flats and lagoons

SEEK OUT: Bright yellow flowers

RABBITBRUSH



Chrysothamnus nauseosus
(syn. *Ericameria nauseosus*)

Asteraceae

- Large clusters of tiny yellow flowers
- Narrow to oblong silvery leaves
- Dense prickly globe shaped shrub
- Blooms in late summer to early fall
- 2-5" tall and wide
- Supports several species of bees, butterflies and pollinating beetles
- Provides habitat for small birds and rodents when dormant



Common Location:

Plains, foothills and
desert to semi-desert
areas

SEEK OUT: Dense shrubs dusted with yellow flowers

PURPLE PRAIRIE CLOVER



Dalea purpurea

Fabaceae

- Flowers purple on cylindrical heads at the top of each stem that look like cones
- Alternate leaves and arranged in five 1" leaflets
- Unbranched, upright and wiry stems
- Grows up to 18" tall in large clumps
- Blooms June to September
- Spreads by seeds
- Attracts butterflies, native bumble bees and honey bees



Common Location:

Prairies and dry hills

SEEK OUT: Elongated purple flower heads

WESTERN GOLDENROD



Euthamia occidentalis **Asteraceae**

- Bright yellow elongated clusters of flowers
- Tall, slender, erect stems
- Alternating narrow leaves that have a pointed tip
- Leaves measure up to 4" long
- Gray-green in color with no hair
- Plant can reach up to 6' in height
- Often supports bee and beetle species



Common Location:

Areas with moist soil such as alongside creeks and rivers

SEEK OUT: Tall stems with clusters of yellow

COMMON BLANKET FLOWER



Gaillardia aristata

Asteraceae

- Flowers can reach up to 3" wide
- Red and yellow centers
- 3 lobed petals with red interior, lined with yellow
- Local species, however, are mostly yellow
- Stems are erect and covered with tiny hairs
- 3 or more alternate, lanceolate, elongated leaves
- Plants can reach up to 20" tall
- Seeds itself
- Flowers from June to September
- Large supporter of adult stage butterflies



Common Location:

Mesas, plains and open forests

Seek out: Bright red petals surrounded by yellow

WILD LICORICE



*Glycyrrhiza
lepidota*

Fabaceae

- White to cream flowers in 4" clusters on terminal spikes
- Pointed opposite leaflets reach up to 1" long
- Stems are covered with sticky hairs
- Grows up to 4' tall
- Fruit in late summer and fall appear as brown, prickly burs
- Blooms from June to July
- Attracts native bees
- Larval host to Silver-spotted Skipper



Common Location:

Prairies, stream
valleys and roadsides

SEEK OUT: Large white flower clusters or brown burs

GUMWEED



Grindelia squarrosa

Asteraceae

- Bright yellow flowers with 12-40 rays per flower head
- Rows of sticky bracts below flower heads
- Alternate gray green toothed leaves
- Erect stems with several branches
- Grows up to 3' tall
- Blooms from July to September
- Attracts native bee species



Common Location:

Prairies and waste places, disturbed areas and stream sides

SEEK OUT: Yellow flowers with sticky plant parts

COMMON SUNFLOWER



Helianthus annuus

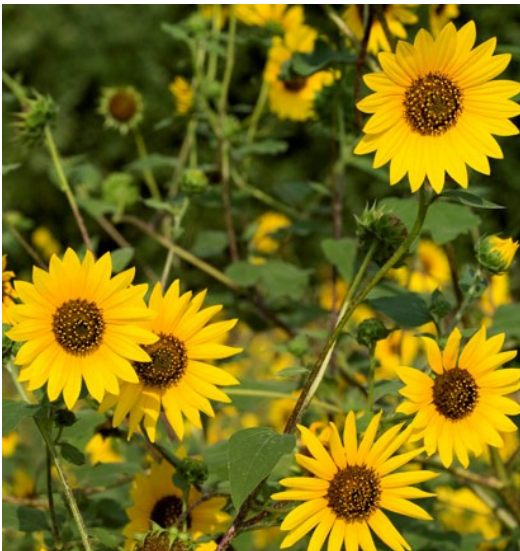
Asteraceae

- Large yellow flowers up to 4" wide with brown centers
- Centers are surrounded by several elongated rays
- Long hairy leaves with toothed margins
- Rough hairy stems
- Can reach up to 6' tall
- Spreads easily by seed
- Seeds are consumed by many species of birds
- Large canopy provides cover for small mammals
- Attracts large numbers of native bees



Common Location:

Dry, open areas and disturbed sites



SEEK OUT: Tall stems with yellow flowers

HAIRY GOLDEN-ASTER



Heterotheca villosa

Asteraceae

- Bright yellow flowers that are up to 1 ¼" wide in branched clusters
- 10-35 rays per flower
- Triangular bracts under flower heads
- Leaves are oblong and alternate
- Spreading leafy stems are covered in grayish hairs
- Blooms from May to October
- Attracts bees and butterflies, can also be eaten by large herbivores



Common Location:

Open plains, rocky slopes, cliffs, from low elevations into coniferous forests

SEEK OUT: Large round clusters of yellow flowers

BLUE FLAX



Linum lewisii

Linaceae

- Flowers have 5 pale blue petals
- Stems have blooms from the bottom up
- Narrow 3/4" long leaves that drop as the plant matures
- Stands 18-20" tall
- Is often not upright due to large numbers of blooms on each stem
- Blooms in Spring
- Attracts large numbers of native bees and variegated fritillary butterflies



Common Location:

Woodlands, prairies,
meadows and open fields

Seek Out: Pale blue saucer shaped flowers

TANSY ASTER



Machaeranthera canescens **Asteraceae**

- Several lavender petals around bright yellow center
- Sticky pointed bracts under flower head
- 10 to 30 flower heads per stem
- Leaves are narrow and alternate and linear to oblong
- Leaves can be sparsely to densely hairy
- Stems are reddish and slender
- Up to 30" tall
- Attracts several bee species and butterflies



Common Location:

Semi-arid grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, pine forests and along streams

SEEK OUT: Small lavender flowers over spiky bracts

COLORADO FOUR O' CLOCK



Mirabilis multiflora

Nyctaginaceae

- 5-lobed cup shape flowers that are tubular with extended stamen
- Open late in the afternoon and close in the morning
- Flowers are solitary on stems and clustered on ends of branches
- Dark green, smooth foliage grows on forked stems in leafy clusters
- Grows up to 18" high and 3' wide
- Brown 1/2" seed pods appear in fall
- Blooms April to September
- Attracts hawkmoths Sphinx chersis, Eumorpha achemon, butterflies and pollen collecting bees
- Also attracts hummingbirds and quail



Common Location:

Open, sandy hillsides and mesas, juniper and pinyon communities, roadsides, extending into deserts and grasslands

SEEK OUT: Vibrant deep pink tubular flowers

CROWNLEAF EVENING-PRIMROSE



*Oenothera
coronopifolia*

Onagraceae

- Large, white, showy and fragrant flowers, up to 4" wide
- Flowers open in the evening and turn pink in the sun
- Bright greenish gray narrow leaves that are fuzzy, lanceolate and lobed
- Up to 24" in height
- Flowers from June to August
- Attracts many bee species and also moths



Common Location:

Plains and prairies and
disturbed areas

SEEK OUT: Broad white flowers low to the ground

LARGE PENSTEMON

*Penstemon
grandiflorus*

Scrophulariaceae

- Large lavender tubular flowers, horizontally arranged
- Opposite, blue-green, waxy leaves
- Smooth unbranched stems
- Grows up to 3' tall
- Blooms from May to June
- Propagates by seed
- Attracts bumble bees



Common Location:
Dry prairies

SEEK OUT: Tall tubular purple flowers

AMERICAN PLUM



Prunus americana

Rosaceae

- Fragrant white flowers that bloom in the spring
- Pointy, finely toothed, acuminate leaves
- Small native tree or shrub with a short trunk
- Can reach up to 20' tall and 15' wide
- Tart red fruit in the fall
- Spreads by seed
- Fruit is eaten by many animals and birds
- Host plant for tiger swallowtail and Western two-tailed swallowtail butterflies



Common Location:

Woodland edges, stream banks and upland pastures

SEEK OUT: large white flower clusters exerted stamens

WESTERN CHOKECHERRY



Prunus virginiana

Rosaceae

- Flowers are white, in elongated unbranched clusters
- Broad egg shaped leaves that have serrate edges
- Stems are thin and gray
- Grows up to 30' tall and forms thickets
- Fruit is small, dark purple, juicy, astringent or bitter pulp, large seed
- Blooms April to July
- Attracts butterflies and native bees
- Larval host for Columbia silkmoth and Small-eyed sphinx
- Berries are eaten by many mammals



Common Location:

Forest edges, meadows, fields, shrublands or thickets, woodlands and disturbed areas

SEEK OUT: Large clusters of white flowers

FRAGRANT SUMAC



Rhus aromatica

Anacardiaceae

- Yellowish catkin-like flowers
- Glossy, bluish-green, coarsely toothed, trifoliate leaves
- Leaves turn orange, red and purple in the fall
- Dark red berries appear in the fall
- Small to medium-size shrub with velvety twigs
- Grows 6-12' tall
- Blooms April to June
- Attracts butterflies and honey bees
- Host plant for Red-banded hairstreak butterfly
- Berries are winter food for small birds including Townsend Solitaires



Common Location:

Dry, rocky prairies, old fields and open woods

SEEK OUT: Fragrant pale yellow flowers

GOLDEN CURRANT

Ribes aureum

Grossulariaceae



- Flowers are yellow with red centers, ½" wide with 5 lobes and 3-5 flowers per spur
- Fan shaped leaves up to 1" wide with 3 apex lobes that are light-green
- Wand like stems
- Shrub that grows up to 8' tall
- Red, black or yellow berries up to ¼" wide that emerge after the flowers drop
- Blooms April to July
- Spreads by seed
- Flowers provide nectar to hummingbirds, butterflies and bees
- Attracts native bees
- Birds, bears and rodents eat the fruit

Common Location:

Moist to drier hillsides
and river valleys

SEEK OUT: Yellow trumpet flowers with red centers

WOODS' ROSE



Rosa woodsii

Rosaceae

- Light to dark pink, delicate, showy, 5-petaled flowers, usually solitary but can be seen in small clusters
- Flowers are sweet smelling
- Five to nine serrated leaflets
- Thorns are straight or slightly curved and tiny
- Bright red rose hips emerge after the flowers drop
- Grows up to 6' tall
- Spreads by seed
- Blooms in June to August
- Attracts native bees
- Hips are a food source for birds, squirrels, mule deer, coyotes and bears



Common Location:

Foothills, subalpine, woodlands, shrublands, disturbed areas and stream sides

SEEK OUT: Delicate pink flowers

COWBOY'S DELIGHT



*Sphaeralcea
coccinea*

Malvaceae

- Bright orange to red papery petals that are lighter at the center
- Highly visible stamen
- Silvery gray alternate leaves with deep lobes covered with tiny hairs
- Low habitat, reaching 4 to 12" tall
- Blooms from May to October
- Food source for larvae of some butterflies



Common Location:

Sunny, open areas of plains and foothills and rocky areas

SEEK OUT: Bright orange flowers with yellow stamen

BLUE VERVAIN



Verbena hastata

Verbenaceae

- Terminal cluster of narrow flowering spikes that bloom light purple to blue
- Spikes branch upwards like a candelabra
- Large opposite, toothed leaves below the clusters of flowers
- Tall, hairy, square, grooved stems
- Supports large numbers of bumblebees
- Also attracts butterflies and birds
- Spreads by seed



Common Location:

Moist prairies and damp thickets

SEEK OUT: Tall whorls of blue flowers

VERVAIN



Verbena stricta

Verbenaceae

- Terminal cluster of narrow flowering spikes that bloom purple
- Large opposite, toothed leaves below the clusters of flowers, that grow in 5-9 leaflets
- Stems are red, hairy and prickled stems
- Up to 4' tall in large thickets
- Blooms July to September
- Attracts native bumble bee species and butterflies
- Larval host to the Common Buckeye
- Seeds are eaten by small mammals and prairie chickens



Common Location:

Fields and prairies

SEEK OUT: tiny purple flowers in dense whorls

SOAPWEED



Yucca glauca

Agavaceae

- Bell-shaped, greenish-white, pendulous flowers
- Leaves are evergreen to pale green and can reach up to 20-30" long
- Leaves are dagger shaped
- Plant reaches 3-4' wide and forms large clumps
- Woody, oblong, cream-colored seed capsules emerge after flowers
- Blooms June to August
- Attracts butterflies
- Larval host for the Yucca moth
- Provides shelter for small mammals, birds and reptiles



Common Location:

Dry plains and sandhills

SEEK OUT: Sharp pointy leaves

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