

Soapstone Prairie Natural Area

Early June Plants



Two-grooved milkvetch *Astragalus bisulcatus* (Pea family) native

This plant comes in white as well, but so far this season, shades from dark magenta to lavender dominate. The name “two-grooved” comes from the grooves in the pods.

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Western wallflower

Erysimum capitatum (Mustard family)
native

Wallflowers were particularly abundant a few weeks ago, but are beginning to fade. The long stringy features are the maturing seed pods.

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Locoweed

Oxytropis lambertii
(Pea family) native

Oxytropis and some Astragalus species are called “locoweed”. However beautiful, Oxytropis are toxic to livestock, especially to horses. In some places—but not usually here—the white *Oxytropis sericea* and this pink species hybridize to yield a wide range of colors from dirty white to blues and pale lavenders. The white one has mostly bloomed and gone to seed by now.



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Mountain bladderpod

Lesquerella montana (Mustard family)
native

These are usually found on granitic soils. They grow relatively close to the ground with small 4-petaled flowers and pods that turn up. They are quite abundant along the Lindenmeier Trail.



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Fuzzy-tongue penstemon

Penstemon eriantherus (Figwort family) native

This uncommon Penstemon is one of the most beautiful of the Penstemons at Soapstone. Penstemons are often called “beard-tongues” because of the fuzzy sterile fifth stamen in the throat of the flower. In this species the tongue protrudes and has long, bright yellow hairs.



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Calcareous cryptantha

Cryptantha (Oreocarya) thyrsoiflora
(Borage family) native

This is a very recognizable species with its tiny white flowers and very fuzzy foliage. Borages are often described as the “bristly borages”. This has a long blooming season.



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