



Wildflower Hike
Flowers of Rainier.com

Tolmie Peak Lookout

This map is intended solely for the purpose of illustrating the route of the hike in relation to the possible viewing of plants and is not intended for navigation or any other route finding purposes.

From one of the four remaining fire lookouts within the Park experience one to the great views of the mountain perched above a remarkable alpine lake. Considered easy and accessible expect an abundance of follow hikers especially on the weekend when the Mowich Lake campground is overflowing. Don't miss the short diversion to Ipsut Pass and a view down into the Ipsut Creek Valley.

1st Leg - Mowich Lake Road to Ipsut Pass Junction: *Approximately 1.10 mi., +418', -263', net gain +155'*. The trailhead is just after the last turn of the Mowich Lake road about .40 miles north of the campground. Proceeding along the northwest side of the lake on what is part of the northern route of the Wonderland Trail. As the trail turns away from the lake there is a short steep section (34% grade) before reaching the junction to Ipsut Pass. A wide variety of forest plants will be found on this leg.

2nd Leg - Junction to Eunice Lake: *Approximately .57 mi., +312', -87', net gain +225'*. Stay right at the junction for a short stroll to Ipsut Pass. Return to the junction to continue the hike to Eunice Lake. More forest plants but look for the bog gentian as the lake nears.

3rd Leg - Lake to Tolmie Peak Lookout: *Approximately .75mi., +545', steepest section .36 mi., +371', 28% grade.* As the trail heads west along the south side of the lake look for marsh marigolds in a swale on the right. On the west end of the lake the trail begins its climb and the wildflower payoff begins starting with a large field of Avalanche Lilies. About midway look for the uncommon serviceberry bush with its unusual white flowers. A Rainier endemic, the Mount Rainier Lousewort, will be found when reaching the ridge. Welcome to Tolmie Peak and a grand view of the grand mountain in all its grandeur.

Guides and Map: Hike 31 in Tami Asars' *Day Hiking Mount Rainier* (2nd edition), Hike 50 in Ron Judd's *Day Hike! Mount Rainier* (4th edition) and Tracy/Giblin *Alpine Flowers of Mt. Rainier*. Greens Trails Maps, No. 269, Mount Rainier West, WA. or Mount Rainier Wonderland, No. 269S.

Distance and Difficulty: The total distance is 2.42 miles, or 4.84 miles round trip if beginning at the trail head as shown (along the road). If starting from the campground the distance is increased .50 miles making the round trip total 5.84 miles. While the elevation difference is only 925' this is deceiving since there is plenty of up and down and some steep sections. The actual elevation gain is 1,275' with a loss of 350' over the route so round trip of total of 1,625' will be "climbed." Asars' guide considers the difficulty as moderate but Judd rates it as difficult. The guides begin the hike at the Mowich Lake campground. The Greens map shows 3.2 miles (6.4 mi. RT) from the campground. To error on the side of caution assume the longer distance.

Preparation: The hike is partially in an forest environment which usually can provide some protection from the elements. The trail is fairly well maintained and heavily used but has its share of rocks, roots and other ankle twisters so good footwear is important. The *Ten Essentials* are always a good idea. Please see "Preparedness for Mount Rainier Hiking" on the *Flowers of Rainier* website, <http://www.flowersofrainier.com>.

Weather Forecast: http://www.atmos.washington.edu/data/rainier_report.html

Trail Conditions: <http://www.nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit/trails-and-backcountry-camp-conditions.htm>

Ranger Station: Carbon River Ranger Station, (360) 829-9639 (may be a summer number only).. Call Longmire Wilderness Information Center, (360) 569-6650, for year-round assistance.

INDEX OF FLOWERS SHOWN ON MAP:

- 1 - **Woodland Penstemon**, *Nothochelone nemorosa*
- 2 - **Queens' Cup**, *Clintonia uniflora*
- 3 - **Foamflower**, *Tiarella trifoliata*
- 4 - **Pinesap**, *Monotropa hypopitys*
- 5 - **Broadleaf Arnica**, *Arnica latifolia*
- 6 - **Arrowleaf Senecio**, *Senecio triangularis*
- 7 - **Thimbleberry**, *Rubus parviflorus*
- 8 - **Rattlesnake Plantain**, *Goodyera oblongifolia*
- 9 - **Green False Hellebore**, *Veratrum viride*
- 10 - **Gray's Lovage**, *Ligusticum grayi*
- 11 - **Scarlet Paintbrush**, *Castilleja miniata*
- 12 - **Cascade Aster**, *Aster ledophyllus*

- 13 - **Tall Bluebell**, *Mertensia paniculata*
- 14 - **Common Harebell**, *Campanula rotundifolia*
- 15 - **Avalanche Lily**, *Erythronium montanum*
- 16 - **Beargrass**, *Xerophyllum tenax*
- 17 - **Mount Rainier Lousewort**, *Pedicularis rainierensis*
- 18 - **Tiger Lily**, *Lilium columbianum*
- 19 - **Orange Agoseris**, *Agoseris aurantiaca*
- 20 - **Elkslip Marsh Marigold**, *Caltha leptosepala*
- 21 - **Western Serviceberry**, *Amelanchier alnifolia*
- 22 - **Pink Mountain Heather**, *Phyllodoce empetriformis*
- 23 - **Mountain Bog Gentian**, *Gentiana calycosa*
- 24 - **Rainier Blueberry**, *Vaccinium deliciosum*

Trail notes, other flowers observed, highlights:

Date of hike: / /