



It's called "Paradise" for a reason and for many this is their first Mount Rainier wildflower experience. Because it is a world renown wildflower destination the trail system must be able to handle large crowds, thus wide paved trails, rope and cane 'fencing' and seating areas. Get immersed amongst the flowers and the people who have come from all over the world to experience Rainier's wildflowers.

The trailhead for all these hikes is the [lower parking lot](#). If starting from the Jackson Visitor Center take a crossing trail (preferably the Avalanche Lily Trail) to intersect with these trails.

Nisqually Vista Trail: *Approximately 0.95 mi., +255'*. A loop trail out to several great viewpoints overlooking the Nisqually River, moraine and glacier. Overall quite easy with a few minor steep sections. Do first as a warm-up or last to take in the afternoon sun on amazing geologic features.

Dead Horse Creek Trail: *Approximately 2.06 mi. RT to Skyline Trail, +653', -0', average grade 12%*. The first portion of the hike follows Dead Horse Creek and thick meadow vegetation. Look for Lewis Monkeyflower close to the stream. A switchback takes you to higher ground and good views back toward the Tatoosh Range.

Moraine Trail: Spur Trail - *approximately 0.96mi. RT, +126' net gain*. The junction to the spur trail is on the Dead Horse Trail approx. .70 mi. from the lower parking lot. Total distance RT is approx. 2.34 mi., +581' net elevation gain. The unpaved unmaintained spur trail drops down below a ridge and heads straight north. It crosses an interesting wet area; look for Jeffrey's Shooting Star.

Alta Vista Trail: *Approximately 1.72mi. RT, +570', -70'*. After crossing the Skyline Trail the trail ascends a surprisingly steep section (18% grade) for about .20 mi. An amazing field of Cascade Aster covers the uphill slope. Turn left to take the upper portion of the loop for amazing views of the mountain dead ahead. Take the lower route back for views of the Edith Creek basin and the Tatoosh Range.

INDEX OF FLOWERS SHOWN ON MAP:

- 1 - **Mountain Daisy**, *Erigeron glacialis*
- 2 - **Sitka Valerian**, *Valeriana sitchensis*
- 3 - **Broadleaf Arnica**, *Arnica latifolia*
- 4 - **Cusick's Veronica**, *Veronica cusickii*
- 5 - **Rosy Spirea**, *Spiraea splendens*
- 6 - **Green False Hellebore**, *Veratrum viride*
- 7 - **Lewis Monkeyflower**, *Erythranthe lewisii*
- 8 - **Smooth Mountain Dandelion**, *Nothocalais alpestris*
- 9 - **Partridge Foot**, *Luetkea pectinata*
- 10 - **Scarlet Paintbrush**, *Castilleja miniata*

Guides and Maps: Hikes 74, 76 and 78 in Tami Asars' *Day Hiking Mount Rainier* (2nd edition), hike 12, Nisqually Vista, and hike 13, Alta Vista, in Judd's *Day Hike! Mount Rainier* (4th edition) and Tracy/Giblin *Alpine Flowers of Mt. Rainier*. Greens Trails Maps, No. 270, Mount Rainier East, WA; Greens Trails Map 270S, Paradise; or Mount Rainier Wonderland, No. 269SX.

Distance and Difficulty: These hikes are generally considered to be "easy" or moderately strenuous. However, always consider difficulty ratings to be relative and for some hikers portions of these routes may present some challenges. For example, even though it's paved, a portion of the Alta Vista Trail north of the junction with the Skyline Trail is quite steep (18% grade, +200' in .2 mi.). The Moraine Trail is not paved or maintained and has its share of rocks, roots and angle twisters. All the hikes combined total about 4.0 mi. and about 1,050' of net elevation gain.

Preparation: These hikes are in an alpine environment which can produce unexpected hazardous conditions including wind, rain, cold, and whiteouts, as well as dehydrating extreme sunlight and heat (possibly all in the same day!). Most of the hikes are in the open, so if its hot be prepared with sun screen and twice the water normally carried. The *Ten Essentials* are always a good idea. The trails are well maintained (mostly paved) and heavily used but good footwear is still advised. The trails are patrolled by volunteer rangers so assistance is available. Most are well versed in wildflower identification so don't hesitate to ask questions. Please see "Preparedness for Mount Rainier Hiking" under Resources in the *Flowers of Rainier* website, <http://www.flowersofrainier.com>.

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

Ranger Station: Paradise Wilderness Information Center, (360) 569-6641 (may be a summer number only).. Call Longmire Wilderness Information Center, (360) 569-6650, for year-round assistance.

- 11 - **Bistort**, *Polygonum bistortoides*
- 12 - **Jeffrey's Shooting Star**, *Dodecatheon jeffreyi* *
- 13 - **Subalpine Lupine**, *Lupinus latifolius* var. *subalpinus*
- 14 - **Pink Mountain Heather**, *Phyllodoce empetriformis*
- 15 - **Western Pasqueflower**, *Anemone occidentalis*
- 16 - **Spreading Phlox**, *Phlox diffusa*
- 17 - **Magenta Paintbrush**, *Castilleja parviflora* var. *oreopola*
- 18 - **Beargrass**, *Xerophyllum tenax*
- 19 - **Mountain Bog Gentian**, *Gentiana calycosa*
- 20 - **Cascade Aster**, *Eucephalus ledophyllus*

* wet area on Moraine Trail

Trail notes, other flowers observed, highlights:

Date of hike: / /