

Wild Plants and Flowers of Idaho

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Chapter 1:

Idaho's State Flower

Idaho selected their state flower in 1931, shortly after becoming a state. They chose the **Philadelphus Lewisii**, which was named after Meriwether



Lewis, the discoverer of the flower. The *Philadelphus Lewisii* is better known as the

syringa flower. The syringa grows generously in the hills and mountains of Idaho's terrain. The Syringa grows best in moist soil along rocky areas,

dry ravines, and streams.

The Boise National Forest is most abundant with the syringa flower along Idaho's rivers, simultaneously with the Chinook salmon's migrating season.



The syringa flower is a woody shrub with clumps of scented white flowers that can grow as tall as 10 feet.

Chapter 2: Poisonous

There are many wild flowers native to Northern Idaho that brighten up a dirt path or side of the road during a leisure walk, but it is important to know the difference between the safe wild flowers and the poisonous wildflowers of Idaho.



First off we have the **Ranunculus**, or Buttercup flower, found in the Idaho Panhandle National Forest and many of the North Western states.

Although this flower looks dainty and inviting, be cautious; the Buttercup, also known as the Little Leaf Buttercup, is very poisonous.

If you have ever walked through the woods or gone on a hiking path in Idaho, you have probably come across a plant called **Urtica Dioica**, otherwise known as Stinging Nettles.

This plant is known for its abundance in the wet regions of Idaho's forests and for its memorable stinging that comes after touching the plant.



Although the blooming flowers can be attractive in the sunlight, remember the poisonous sting that can come from them.

The **Tanacetum Vulgare**, or Tansy, is one very common plant that can likely grow in your backyard. The Tansy is a widespread, tall, aromatic herb that grows abundantly in the forests of Idaho. The Tansy plant is poisonous to animals and humans, as the consumption of the plant can cause intestinal inflammations and even spasms and convulsions.



Chapter 3: Non-Poisonous

Amongst the poisonous plants in Idaho, there are many wildflowers that are both beautiful and safe for a bouquet in your living room.

With a light pink and fuchsia



flower, the

Trifolium Pratense

most likely grows in many Idahoans' backyards. Referred to as Cow grass at

times, the Red Clover's flower, leaves, and stem are all edible. If you are relaxing outside and think you want a little snack or to try something new,

pull the flowering leaves out of the plant and suck on the bottom.

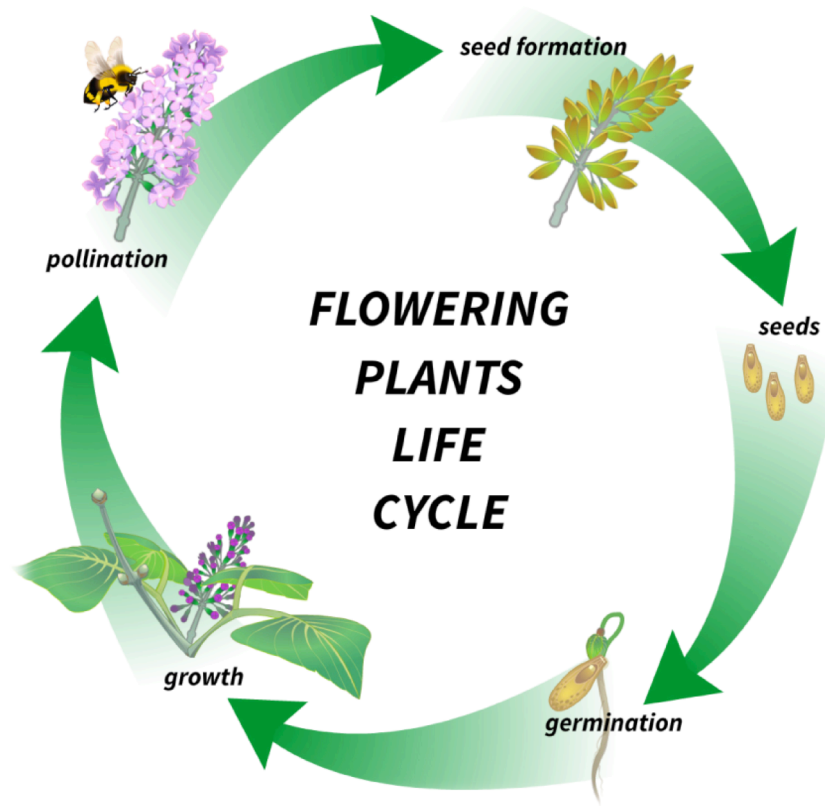
Native to twelve states, the Serviceberry plant is common across the forest and foliage of the



Idaho terrain. The Serviceberry plant blooms earlier than most plants and provides the vast amount of food for other native animals.

The serviceberry fruit and leaves are both edible to animals and humans. The fruit is close to what a huckleberry would look like and close in flavor as well.

Life Cycle of a Plant



Glossary

Philadelphus Lewisii: Also known as the syringa, a deciduous shrub native to western North America

Chinook Salmon: Largest species of Pacific salmon. They live in Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and other northern states.

Shrub: Woody plant that is smaller than a tree and has several main stems.

Ranunculus: Plant such as the buttercup with yellow or white flowers and lobed or toothed leaves.

Urtica Dioica: Herbaceous perennial flowering plant native to Europe, Asia, and western North American.

Tanacetum Vulgare: Flowering plant of the aster family, which is native to Europe, Asia, and some western parts of North America.

Trifolium Pratense: Species of flowering plant in the bean family that is native to Europe, Asia, Africa, and some western states of North America.

Works Referenced

"ID Syringa Bush on Salmon River" by Flickr user "Nhigh" used under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) 3.0 License

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Idaho Wild Plants and Flowers

Quiz

1. What is the scientific name of Idaho's state flower, the syringa?
2. T or F: Stinging nettles are poisonous to both humans and animals
3. What are the five steps of a flowering plant's life cycle?
4. To how many states is the serviceberry plant native?
5. What is the common name for the Ranunculus flower?

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.2

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.4

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant in a *grade four topic or subject area*.

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