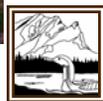


Arctic Plants & Wildflowers

Common Species guide



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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT ▼
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Wild Sweet Pea

(Pea Family, *Hedysarum mackenzii*)

18" to 24" tall, grow in gravel, or rocky areas in select patches. Bright pink blooms cluster at the tops of stem, and consist of 1/4" to 3/4" wide, very fragrant pea shape petals.

Note: Roots of this plant are known to be poisonous, not to be confused with *Hedysarum alpinum* (Eskimo Potato) of the same family whose roots are edible.



Eskimo Potato

(Pea family, *Hedysarum alpinum*)



Up to 24" tall, growing in select patches of rocky soil, often seen on gravel bars near creeks & rivers. Plant resembles the wild sweet pea, only with lighter pink or purple flowers developing along one side of stalk, blooms generally start lower on the stalk, and work their way up. Roots are edible and nutritious to humans

& wildlife. A favorite of Interior grizzlies.

Tundra Rose, Shrubby Cinquefoil

(Rose family, *Potentilla fruticosa*)

Shrub, reaches 1.5 to 3 feet tall, reddish brown stems shed bark. Leaves are small & grow in groups of five. Produce bright yellow 1" to 1.5" blooms in late June, through July, and early August (five petal flower). These are commonly seen growing in rocky soil, or gravelly areas along roadsides.



Arctic Cotton, Cotton grass

(Sedge family, *Eriophorum scheuchzeri*) This plant thrives in wet, marshy areas, and can reach 12" to 15" in height. Single stems produce a brownish bloom in early June, which will seed to cotton-like wind dispersed seed in late June and early July. With little time to decomposes before freeze-up, layers of dead grass build up over time producing tussocks, sometimes 1 to 2 feet in height.

Alpine Arnica

(Daisy, Aster family, *Arnica alpina*)

Found growing in dry, rocky, or gravelly soil. Tall stem, 7" to 12" in height, produce one bright yellow daisy-like flower, blooms usually in mid-June, through July. Small hairs are present both on the stem, and on the 2 to 3 sets of narrow leaves.



Black Tipped Groundsel

(Daisy, Aster family, *Senecio lugens*)

Grows in moderately moist soil or fields. This is a tall plant, averaging 18". One long tall stem springs from small group of narrow leaves remaining close to ground. Multiple bright yellow daisy like blooms protrude on separate stems from the top of stalk, and blooms are often pointed downward consisting of 8 narrow petals. Blooms in June & July.



Yellow Dryas

(Rose family,
Dryas drummondii)



Found growing in well drained / gravel areas. Small tooth-edged leaves grow in spreading patches. Short stemmed drooping flowers bloom in June & early July. Seed pods will spiral, unfolding to fluffy, wind dispersed seed by late July.

Labrador Tea

(Heath family,
Ledum palustris ssp
groenlandicum)

Small evergreen shrub growing in tundra, marshy areas, and woodlands. Shrub height is 10" to 30", with small leathery leaves, brighter green in summer months, darker in winter. Clustered white flowers bloom in June, and may last into July. Tea can be made from the leaves, but may upset stomach if not accustom.



Common Fireweed

(Evening Primrose family,
Epilobium angustifolium)

Tall plant, 2.5 to 5 feet, found growing in a variety of locations, common in fields. Narrow bright green leaves grow alternately up stem. Root system is very deep. Bright pink flowers begin blooming lower on stalk in July, and blooms work their way toward the top blooming into August.

Name derived from being one of the first plants to regenerate after a forest fire due to the deep root system, and wind dispersed seed. All parts of plant edible.



Dwarf Fireweed

(Evening Primrose family,
Epilobium latifolium)

Commonly found growing along rivers & streams in gravelly areas. Sprawling stems grow in clusters, with alternating bluish/green leaves, reddish stalk is 4" to 12" in height. Blooms are multiple at the top of stem, and consist of 4 bright pink petals, and 4 darker pink sepals.



Prickly Rose / Wild Rose

(Rose family, *Rosa acicularis*)

Found growing in fields, meadows, and roadsides throughout AK. "Prickly" or heavily thorned shrub, height varies, up to 4 to 5 feet. Rounded, toothed edge, bright green leaves. Light to med pink flowers consisting of 5 petals and bright yellow centers begin blooming in June. Flowers drop their petals within a few days of blooming, and "rose hips" (seed pod) begin developing. Rose hips will turn a bright red when ripe (late August), and are very high in vitamin C, but seeds must be removed before eating.



Fox Tail / Squirrel Tail

(Grass family, *Hordeum jubatum*)

Commonly seen along roadsides, or other gravelly locations. Grass reaches 10" to 16" in height, with green sweeping heads developing in June, turning purplish to rose colored during July. Seeding heads are wind dispersed, separating into stiff spined ended tufts that are a choking hazard for pets & wildlife.

Northern Yarrow

(Aster family, *Achillea Borealis*)

Grows in well drained soil, gravelly areas, roadsides, and fields. Average height is 10 to 18", with fernlike leaves alternating up the stem. Seed heads bloom in a flat topped cluster of many small white flowers, with multiple heads atop each stem. This plant is believed to have many medicinal qualities & is used for a variety of ailments.



Purple Oxytrope / Yellow Oxytrope

(Pea Family, *Oxytropis nigrescens, campestris*)

Prefers dry & gravelly soil. Grows in small or large clumps, and has a long tap root, with stems reaching 6" to 8" in height, bushy fern-like leaves are sometimes slightly haired. Blooms are multiple & pea like at the ends of stems. This plant begins blooming in late May & continues through mid-July. NOT EDIBLE.



Pale Indian Paintbrush

(Figwort family, *Castilleja caudata*)

There are many varieties of paintbrush growing throughout Alaska. This variety grows in woods, meadows, tundra, and is between 8" to 16" in height. Flowers are white, and bracts are white to slightly yellowish, shrouding the blooms. Leaves are narrow, alternating up the plant stem. Grows 2 to 3 in patches, and blooms in late June & early July.