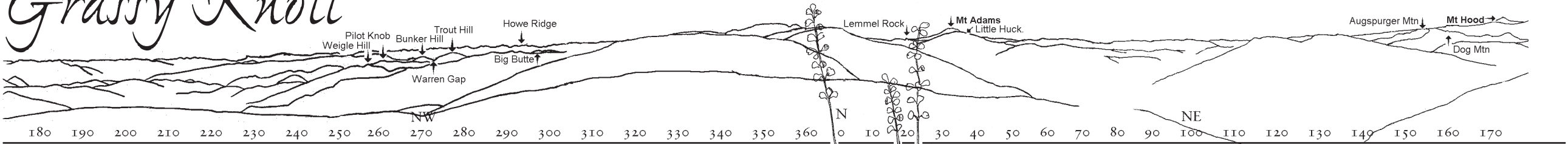


Grassy Knoll

Botanical Special Interest Area

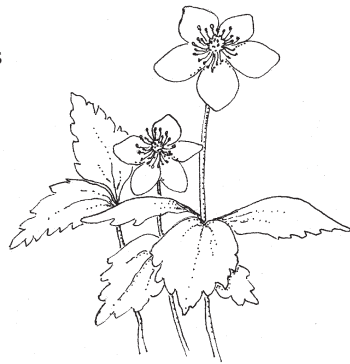
The View from Grassy Knoll



“When I first approached Grassy Knoll in 1994, I couldn’t believe the stunning array of wild flowers and the great view. This, together with the Knoll’s fascinating geology and cultural history, makes it a little paradise on earth and one great place to be.”

Linda McMahan, Botanist and past Executive Director, The Berry Botanic Garden.

The sheer numbers of different kinds of plants more than 180 occur naturally in the 2,070-acre Grassy Knoll protected area. Why so much botanical diversity in so small an area? The answer lies in a convergence of several biogeographic regions east, west, north, and south right at this location. Its relatively low elevation (3,649 ft.) and its nearness to the Columbia River Gorge, visible from the knoll, add complexity. Add the further flavor of geologic uplift and slow weathering to create rocky outcrops, sheer cliffs, and steep slopes, and diversity increases even more.

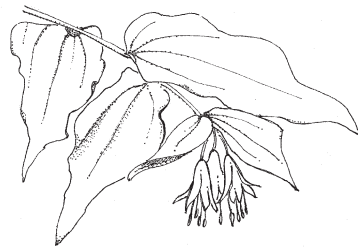


Anemone deltoidea

The Grassy Knoll trail rises gradually a little more than 800 feet from the trail head, up through myriad habitats. Look for many wild flowers, shrubs, understory and overstory trees, nurse logs, and other botanical features along the way. May through July offer the best wild flower displays.

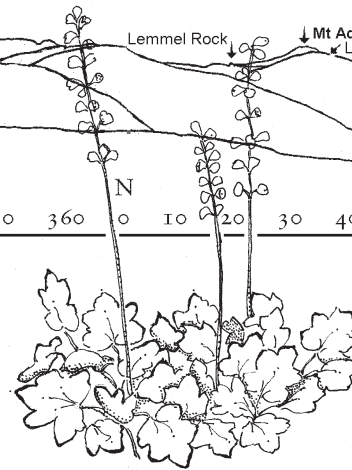
The Grassy Meadow: Near the trail head, a rocky and open meadow echoes the vegetation at the top of Grassy Knoll. Depending upon the month, you can see mariposa lily, tiger lily, Nootka rose, wild onion, and blue field gilia amongst cushions of the native low-growing common juniper.

Western Hemlock Forest: Moving from the meadow into this second growth forest is like entering a new world. Under the overstay of Douglas fir and the towering western hemlock, with its scattering of tiny cones, is a lush understory of typical plants of the forested western Cascades vine maple, pathfinder, wood anemone, fairy bells, and much more. About a mile into the trail, look for a magnificent fallen log, now a nurse log to tiny new trees and understory herbs.



Disporum bookeri

The Borrow Pit: As the trail emerges from the lower forest, you pass an old rock quarry on the right, with tumbles of dark Columbia River basalt, typical of the underlying rock of the area. On a clear day, this opening provides your first glimpses of vistas to the north and east.



Heuchera cylindrica

favorite lunch spot features the bright pink cliff penstemon, coral-bells, stonecrops and other rock-loving species. The spot overlooks the sparsely forested but visually distinct Big Lava bed, a five-by-nine mile boot-shaped testament to the region’s recent geologic past. Further along, a lichen-encrusted rocky area to the right of the trail features woolly sunflower, mariposa lily, a sun-loving rock fern, and many other plants. Please respect this rocky garden and stay on the path.

The Old Burn: In the 1980’s, as a wildfire was rushing toward Grassy Knoll, the Forest Service made a quick decision to stop the fire at the ridge top. The trail winds along the eastern side of the burn, now dominated by nearly a monoculture of Scouler’s willow, interspersed with burnt but still standing tree trunks, huckleberries, and bear grass.

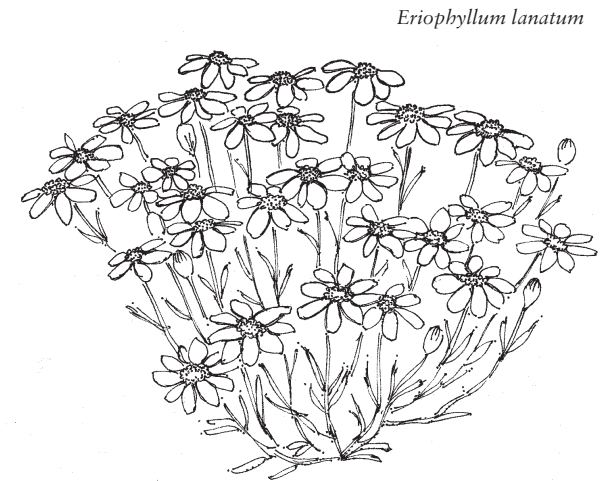
The High Forest: From this ridge top, the trail enters another forest, this one dominated by silver and grand firs, with cones that shatter as they hit the ground. In this more open understory, several large patches of wood anemone greet the July visitor. The trail slopes down here to a saddle before the final climb to the knoll itself. Along the descent,

Rocky Outcrops:

Above the borrow pit, the trail turns toward the northwest and then winds by rocky outcrops formed by uplifting and shattering of volcanic flows. This

look for signs of bear, particularly near some large ant hills, one of their food sources. Also, look for old wood posts and other structures that at one time carried electricity to the fire tower.

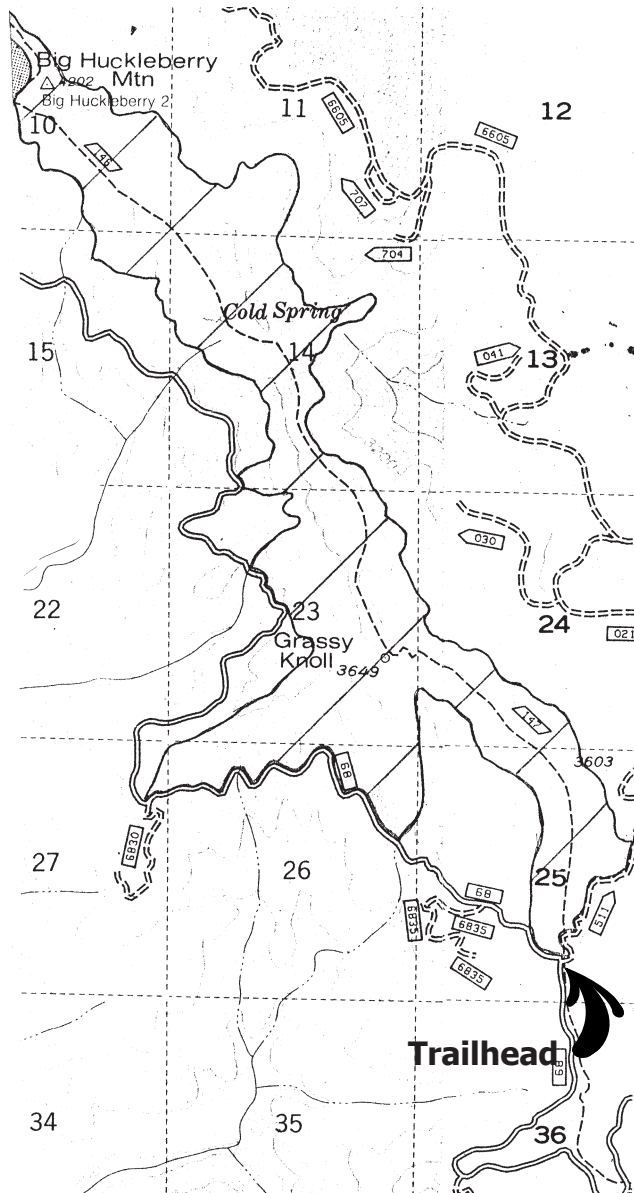
Grassy Knoll: Emerging from the forest, the trail goes up several steep but short switchbacks to the top of Grassy Knoll where the fire tower stood until the early 1970’s. This small and rounded, weathered peak braves harsh westerly winds. The wind, together with the shallow, rocky soil, and probably repeated wild fires, has favored the meadow vegetation found here. Look for dwarf lupines, balsam root, big headed clover, and mariposa lily nestled amongst the windswept common juniper and silvery, gray lichen.



Eriophyllum lanatum

Map of the Grassy Knoll Trail

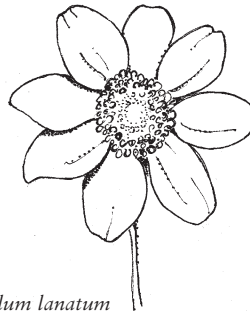
From Washington Highway 14 take Cook-Underwood Road North to Willard. HEad East on Forest Service Raod 66 and continue East on FS Road 68. The Grassy Knoll Trailhead is at the junction of FS road 68 and 511.



Selected List of Plants of the Grassy Knoll Area

Common name, *botanical name* (Family)

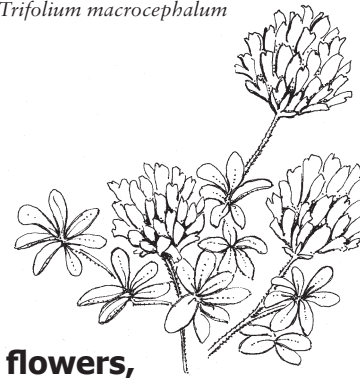
- balsam root, *Balsamorhiza deltoidea* (Asteraceae)
- bear grass, *Xerophyllum tenax* (Liliaceae)
- big-headed clover, *Trifolium macrocephalum* (Fabaceae)
- blue field gilia, *Gilia capitata* (Polimoniaceae)
- cliff larkspur, *Delphinium menziesii* (Ranunculaceae)
- cliff penstemon, *Penstemon rupicola* (Scrophulariaceae)
- common juniper, *Juniperus communis* (Cupressaceae)
- devil's club, *Oplopanax horridum* (Araliaceae)
- fairy bells, *Disporum hookeri* (Liliaceae)
- grand fir, *Abies grandis* (Pinaceae)
- huckleberry, *Vaccinium species* (Ericaceae)
- lava alumroot, *Heuchera cylindrica* (Saxifragaceae)
- lupine, *Lupinus laxiflorus* (Fabaceae)
- mariposa lily, *Calochortus subalpinus* (Liliaceae)
- Nootka rose, *Rosa nutkana* (Rosaceae)
- parsley fern, *Cryptogramma crispa* (Polypodiaceae)
- path finder, *Adenocaulon bicolor* (Asteraceae)
- rosy pussytoes, *Antennaria microphylla* (Asteraceae)
- Scouler's willow, *Salix scouleri* (Salicaceae)
- silver fir, *Abies amabilis* (Pinaceae)
- snowberry, *Symphoricarpos albus* (Caprifoliaceae)
- stonecrop, *Sedum oreganum* (Crassulaceae)
- tiger lily, *Lilium columbianum* (Liliaceae)
- vine maple, *Acer circinatum* (Aceraceae)
- western hemlock, *Tsuga heterophylla* (Pinaceae)
- wild onion, *Allium species* (Liliaceae)
- wood anemone, *Anemone deltoidea* (Ranunculaceae)
- wooly sunflower, *Eriophyllum lanatum* (Asteraceae)



Eriophyllum lanatum

For a more detailed list of plant species of Grassy Knoll Botanical Special Interest Area, please contact the Forest Service Office at (206) 750-5000

Trifolium macrocephalum



“Don’t pick the flowers, and keep your dogs on the trail.”

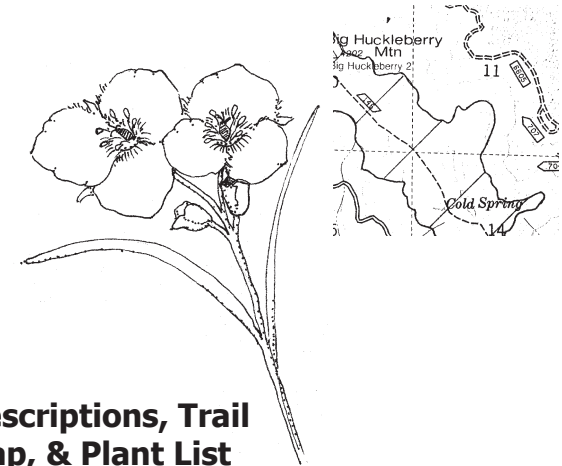
Grassy Knoll is designated an area of special botanical interest because of the unique assemblage of plants in its woodland and open places. A number of plants, including *Fritillaria pudica* (yellow bells), *Synthyris stellata* (Columbia Kittentails), and *Trifolium macrocephalum* (big-headed clover) reach the limit of their range of occurrence in the Grassy Knoll area. A few plants, including *Lepidium heterophyllum*, are out of their range entirely.

Please help protect this special area and the plants that inhabit it. If you must have a specimen, follow Forest Service rules and obtain a permit at the local ranger station. With that, take only seeds in small quantities or a few cuttings. It is illegal and unethical to dig native plants in the wild, and as most perish from transplant shock days after collecting, it's a waste of time and energy.

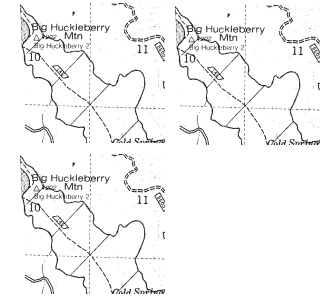
Enjoy your visit to Grassy Knoll and leave it as you found it for others who follow...

Grassy Knoll

Botanical Special Interest Area



Descriptions, Trail Map, & Plant List



Illustrations by Diane Bland
Layout by Will Simonds
The Berry Botanic Garden

