

LEWIS AND CLARK ON BOUNTIFUL PLAINS OF THE MISSOURI

May 8, 1805

Confluence of the Milk and Missouri rivers

"The water of this river possesses a peculiar whiteness, being about the colour of a cup of tea with the admixture of a tablespoonfull of milk. from the colour of it's water we called it Milk river. (we think it possible that this may be the river called by the Minetares the river which scolds at all others . . .)"

MERIWETHER LEWIS

May 8, 1805— Clark documented the wealth of Great Plains fauna: buffalo, elk, antelope, deer, beaver, and wolves. Lewis described the whiteapple in exacting botanical detail, including its culinary traits: "the whiteapple appears to me to be a tasteless insipid food of itself tho' I have no doubt but it is a very healthy and moderately nutritious food. I have no doubt but our epicures would admire this root very much, it would serve them in their ragouts and gravies in stead of the truffles Morella." The flora and fauna of the Missouri Plains provided the party with a limitless source of food, clothing, and gear.

Native Plant Species

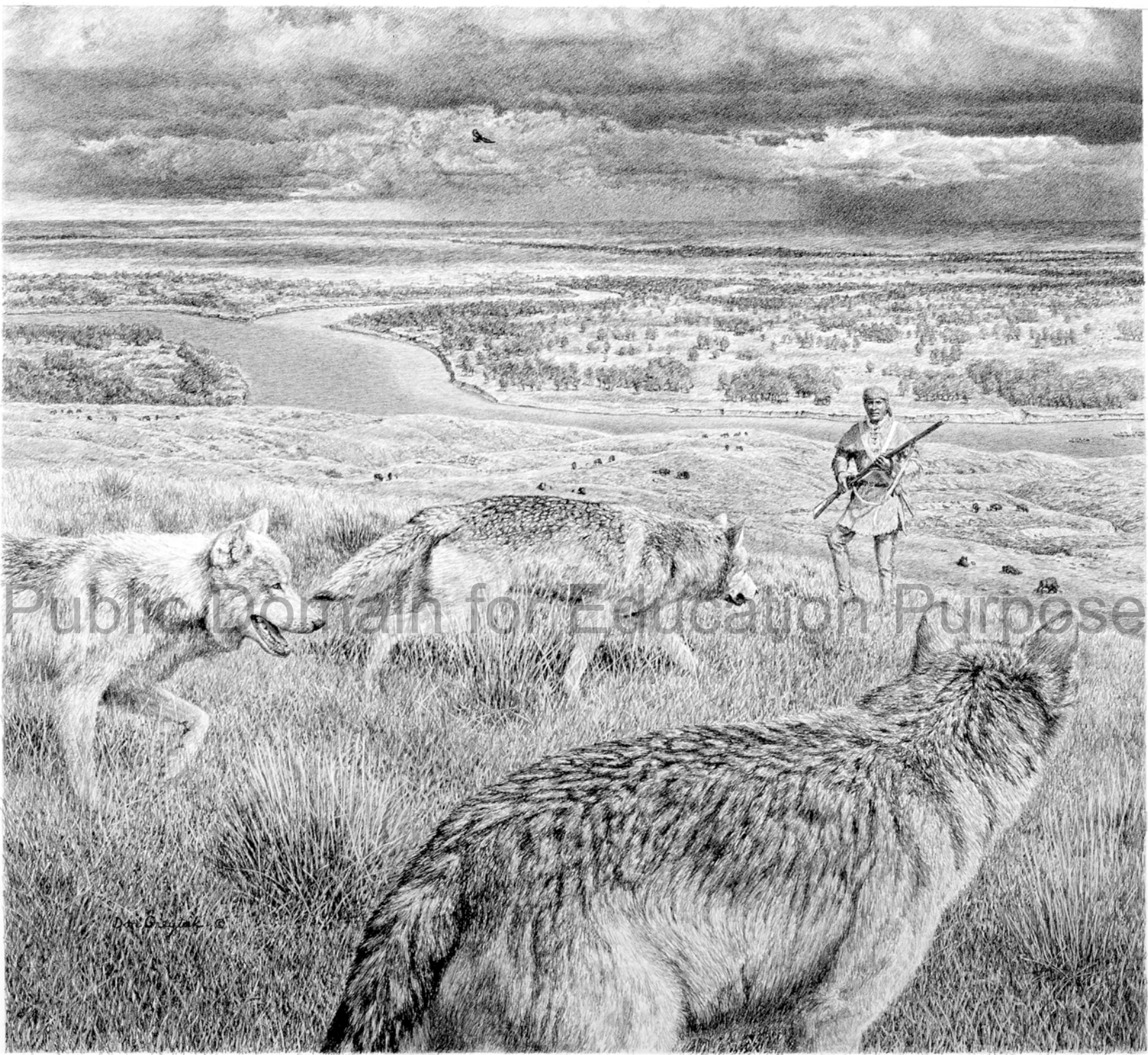
Whiteapple height: up to 8 inches habitat: prairie, open woodland, and plains Also known as Indian breadfruit, the flowers are like blue peas. Stems and leaves are covered with long silvery hairs. The edible root served the Missouri Indians as a year-round staple.	Wild Licorice height: 1 to 4 feet habitat: moist meadow, ditches, and stream banks Another food of the Indians, Clark wrote that Sacajawea "geathered on the sides of the hills the wild lickerish . . . and gave me to eat".	Greasewood height: up to 7 feet habitat: saline or alkaline soil of dry regions/floodplains Greasewood has whitish bark and fleshy needle-like leaves. Branch ends are sharp. Lewis called it a "fleshy leafed thorn".
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Pediomelum esculentum

Glycyrrhiza lepidota

Sarcobatus vermiculatus



Montana artist Don Greytak beautifully illustrates Captain Clark in May, 1805 above the confluence of the Milk and Missouri rivers, exploring the rich hunting grounds of the Great Plains.

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Statewide Noxious Weed Awareness and Education Campaign
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The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail weed education project was initiated and developed in 1997 by Montana's Statewide Noxious Weed Awareness and Education Campaign Task Force. The project grew to eleven locations by 2003 with the addition of Tower Creek Pyramids site cooperating with Idaho's Weed Awareness Campaign. By 2008 collaboration increased to the diverse entities shown on the reverse side of this sheet.

Today—As you travel up the Missouri and around Fort Peck Reservoir in eastern Montana, you will observe non-native plant species like saltcedar and diffuse knapweed that were not present when Lewis and Clark traveled up the river. Invasive plant species we find today at many areas around Fort Peck Reservoir were brought by unsuspecting travelers along waterways, roads, and trails. Wildlife, livestock, people, and pets transport seeds on their coats, clothing, shoe treads, vehicles, and boats.

Once introduced, invasive species can spread rapidly and become difficult and costly to eradicate. Saltcedar is an aggressive woody plant that once established can survive a wide range of environmental conditions. Diffuse knapweed is very competitive in dry rangeland conditions, and Canada thistle adapts to many habitats.

You can help protect pristine areas from invasive species by not walking or driving through infestations and by washing your clothing, gear, and vehicles between site visits.

Invasive Plant Species

Saltcedar	Knapweed	Thistle
height: 5 to 20 feet habitat: streams and floodplains, dry saline flats A stand of this woody shrub can take up a lot of water every day and subsequently change normal flood cycles. Leaves that fall to the ground deposit salt in the soil.	height: 1 to 2 feet habitat: roadsides, dry rangeland Diffuse knapweed flowers can be white, pink or purple. Spiny bracts cup the buds, and stems are rough.	height: 1 to 4 feet habitat: wide range, adaptable to most habitats Canada thistle's creeping roots are key to its establishment and survival. Plants produce many fluffy seeds that are easily dispersed by the wind.



Tamarix ramosissima

Centaurea diffusa

Cirsium arvense