LEWIS AND CLARK AT GATES OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

July 17, 1805

Gates of the Rocky Mountains

“The sunflower is in bloom and abundant in the river bottoms. The Indians of the Missouri particularly those who do not cultivate maze make great use of the seed of this plant for bread, or use it in thickening their soups.”

MERIWETHER LEWIS

July 17, 1805—Meriwether Lewis observed a species of flax growing in the river bottoms as he traveled along the Missouri River near the Gates of the Rocky Mountains. Lewis noted that the specimen resembles the common flax cultivated in the "U States", Williams Clark walked on an "Indian road" in search of Shoshone Indians who he hoped could supply the group with horses to cross the Rocky Mountains. Clark encountered abandoned Indian camps with shelters built of willow brush. He observed pine trees that had been peeled of their bark by native Americans, according to Sacajawea, for sap and the soft part of the wood and bark for food.

Native Plant Species

Gayfeather

Height: 2 to 10 inches
Habitat: sandy soil
Dotted Gayfeather is also known as blazing star. A member of the aster family, this Great Plains species has roots that can extend many feet into the soil. These deep roots allow Dotted Gayfeather to withstand drought conditions.

Blue Flax

Height: 8 to 24 inches
Habitat: well-drained prairie soil up to alpine ridges
This perennial member of the flax family is named in honor of Meriwether Lewis who collected the plant in July 1806 near Great Falls. The seed of this plant is an important food source for many birds.

Coneflower

Height: 1 to 4 feet
Habitat: prairie, waste area, and roadside
Prairie Coneflower is also known as Mexican hat. Usually bright yellow flowers surround a column-shaped, dark disk in the center.

Invasive Plant Species

ToadFlax

Height: 2 to 3 feet
Habitat: variety
Dalmation toadflax was introduced to the United States as an ornamental and is used in fabric dyes. Snapdragons have bright yellow with orange throats and long spurs.

Leathery Spurge

Height: 1 to 3 feet
Habitat: variety
Bright yellow-green flowers and linear leaves make leafy spurge easy to identify. Look for milky latex in the stem and long creeping roots.

Knapweed

Height: 1 to 3 feet
Species: spotted and diffuse
Habitat: variety
The pinkish-purple flower heads of spotted knapweed differ in color from the white to occasionally pink flowers heads of diffuse knapweed.

Montana artist Don Greytak captures the "most remarkable cliffs" where according to the journals 'every object here wears a dark and gloomy aspect.' Members of the expedition talked about prickly pear and Meriwether Lewis wrote of his delight with the abundance of currants he found growing along the river.

www.dongreytak.com
www.mtзавр.org
www.mtзавр.org
www.штавс.org
www.weedawarenesses.org
www.whatstyourworld.org

The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail education project was funded and administered in 1997 by Meriwether's Statue Wayside National Refuge and Education Campaign, Inc.

The project is now funded by NPS with the assistance of BLM, USFWS, NPS, and the Corps of Engineers. The project is now funded by NPS with the assistance of BLM, USFWS, NPS, and the Corps of Engineers. The project is now funded by NPS with the assistance of BLM, USFWS, NPS, and the Corps of Engineers. The project is now funded by NPS with the assistance of BLM, USFWS, NPS, and the Corps of Engineers. The project is now funded by NPS with the assistance of BLM, USFWS, NPS, and the Corps of Engineers.

Pulling Against Noxious Weeds

Statewide Noxious Weed Awareness and Education Campaign
KCU LOES • PO Box 175310 • Bozeman, MT 59717-3120

Euphorbia esula

Centaurea maculosa

Cirsium diffusa

Linaria dalmatica