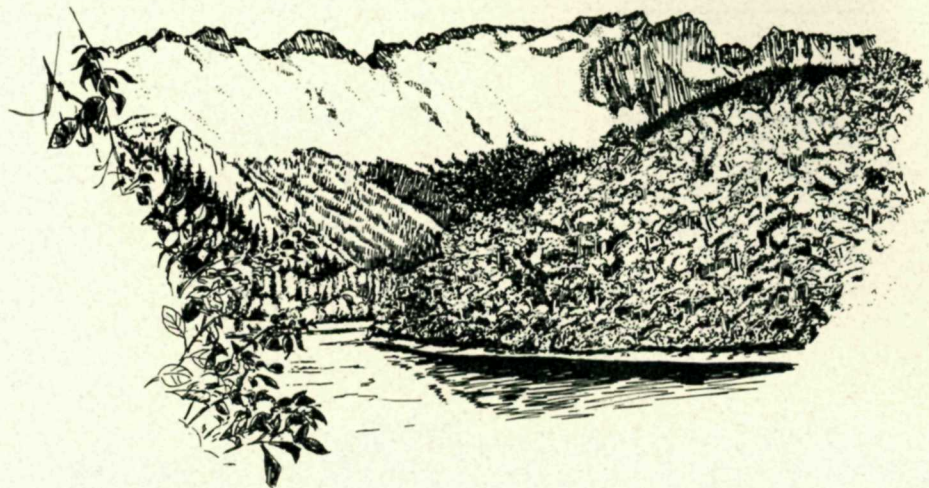


CASCADE PASS AREA



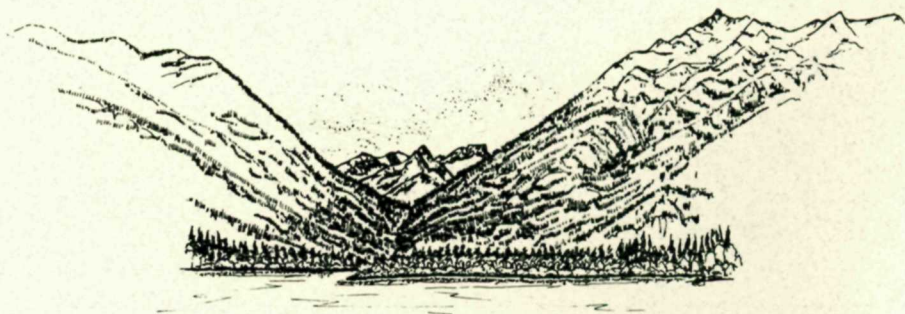
*A PLACE OF BEAUTY
UNIMPAIRED*

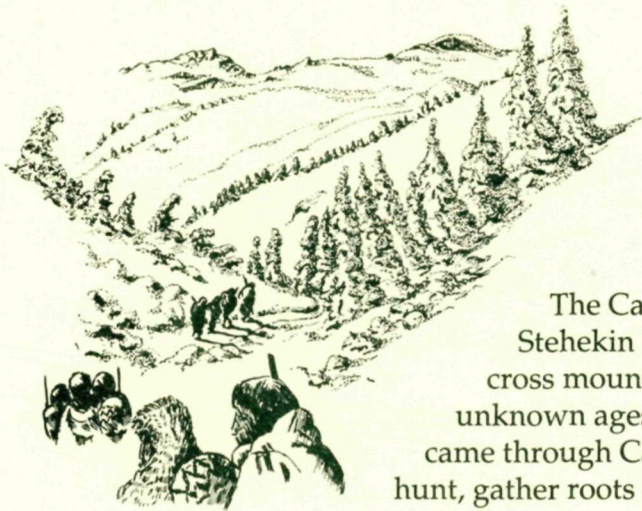


First Glimpses

Eastbound near mile 100 on Highway 20 one encounters magnificent views of peaks and glaciers framed above the Skagit River. This breathtaking introduction to the North Cascades is the Eldorado-Forbidden group of peaks—sentinels overlooking Cascade Pass.

As “The Lady of the Lake” cruises Lake Chelan’s narrowing course into the mountains, attention centers ahead to the Stehekin Valley and glimpses of icy peaks beyond. A blast of the boat’s horn signals the final stop and a welcome to Stehekin Landing. National Park Service shuttle bus drivers wait to transfer you and your pack for a tour to the Upper Valley where distant views become magnificent reality.





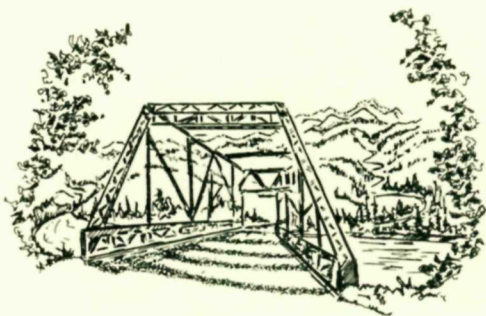
The Way Through

The Cascade and Stehekin Valleys were cross mountain routes for unknown ages. Native people came through Cascade Pass to hunt, gather roots and berries, and “speak with mountain spirits.” “The great journey” was to descend to far-side valleys to visit and trade with seldom seen friends.

In 1814, an attempt to explore a fur trade route from the Columbia River through Cascade Pass failed when Indian guides and Alexander Ross turned back in the face of a severe mountain storm. Skagit gold prospectors finally traversed the pass in 1877. A very difficult crossing by a military unit in 1882 brought attention to this wild and beautiful country.

Subsequent surveys found the Cascade Pass route far too challenging for rail or highways. However, the lure of wealth caused prospectors to open trails into Boston Basin, Sahale Arm, Doubtful Lake, and Horseshoe Basin—some of the most spectacular places in the Cascade Mountains.

Mining and logging roads eventually extended up the Cascade and Stehekin valleys. While mining ventures never paid off, access to the mountains brought people in contact with a wealth of beauty. An outing to the Pass Area by the Portland “**Mazamas**” in 1906 inspired a movement for a national park in the North Cascades. The Stehekin Valley became a popular vacation destination and home for a few hardy families. On the west side, the U.S. Forest Service extended the road and graded an easy trail to the Pass.



Mountain Roads

From the West

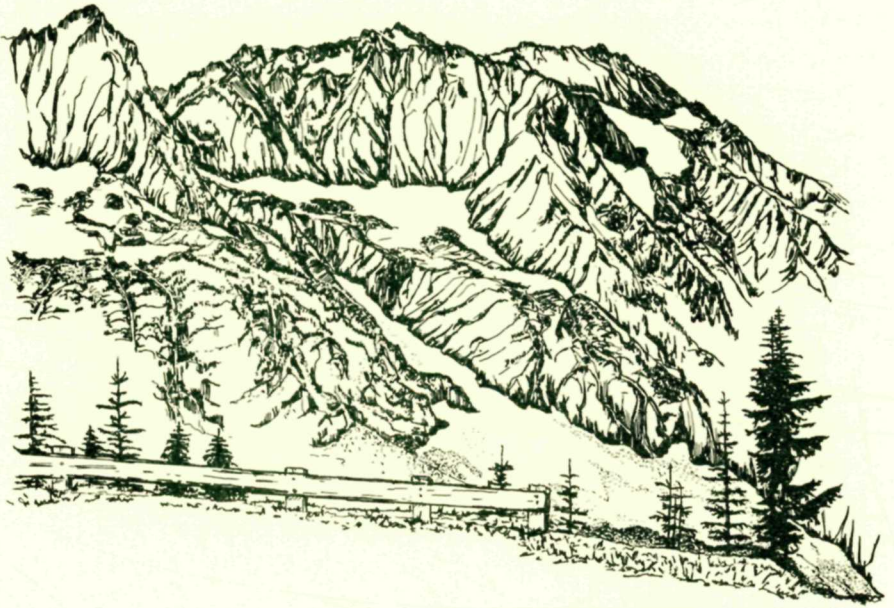
The Cascade River Road branches from State Route 20 near mile 105

at Marblemount. Information, maps, and permits for overnight stays are available at the National Park Service Wilderness Information Station. The 23-mile, mostly unpaved road becomes narrower as it climbs toward a parking area below Cascade Pass. Be watchful—this “Mine to Market” road accommodates heavy trucking. Side roads, trailheads, and campgrounds offer opportunities along the way. The North Cascades National Park is entered at mile 19.

From the East

Stehekin Landing offers information, interpretive services, tour busses, gift shops, food, and lodging. The Valley Road, which has no connection with the outside, passes by scattered homesites for several miles, then narrows and winds up the river's gorge. Spectacular waterfalls crash from high ridges to the forests below. Bus drivers interpret natural and historic attractions along the valley. The final stop and turnaround, at Cottonwood Camp, is the start of the 5.5-mile trail up through Pelton Basin to Cascade Pass.





Cascade Pass Parking Area

The Cascade Pass parking area is where westside hikers and mountaineers leave their cars. It is also an exhilarating place to experience the mountains.

From here, Mt. Johannesburg dominates. Viewers are dwarfed by the huge sculpture being created by ongoing natural forces. Slowly this great rock mass is being squeezed upwards from the Earth's crust—while icy chisels are carving its craggy features.

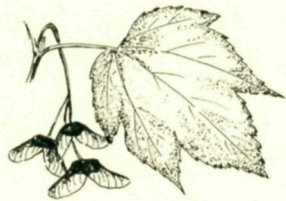
Heavy winter snowfalls add to glacial masses on shady north-facing slopes. Under accumulating weight, plasticized ice is forced downward—scouring at bedrock as it flows. You are quite likely to witness a thundering rampage as ice moving over precipices breaks loose, cascading down the mountain to just below this vantage point. Glacial actions over millions of years have shaped surrounding peaks, basins, and valleys. The “U”-shaped Cascade River Valley below was widened as large glaciers moved down the valley in past ice ages.

From the forested valley, we look upward through ever decreasing trees to strips of shrubby growth clinging to high ridges—eventually succumbing to alpine rock and ice. Elevation has a dramatic affect on weather, the weather on plants, and plants on animal life. Snow becomes the major factor in limiting and shaping life as one moves upward.

If you choose to continue to the pass, please be prepared! The trail is 3.7 miles and 36 switchbacks long. It climbs gradually from 3,600 to 5,400 feet. Wear comfortable shoes and expect marked temperature change. Biting insects can be persistent. Allow at least four hours. Carry extra food, clothing, and water. Secure other valuables in your car trunk, but be sure to bring your camera!



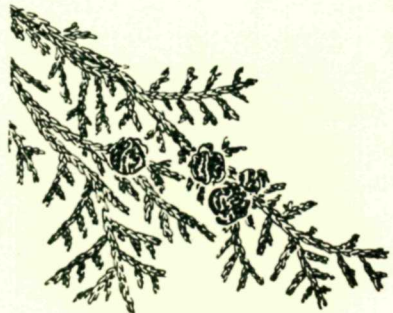
Douglas-fir



Douglas Maple



Silver fir



Alaska Yellow Cedar

The Mountain Forest Zone

Starting up the trail, we leave behind the lowland forest of western hemlock, red cedar, and large Douglas-fir. Here, their mountain cousins have adapted to a place of heavy snow. Trees are now conical in shape with short or very limber limbs. Look for the silver fir with widely spaced swirls of limbs, and the mountain hemlock with massive trunks and short, bushy foliage. Unlike the outward spreading limbs of redcedar, Alaska yellow cedar has drooping limbs designed to shed snow. A sure way to know you are above 3,500 ft. is by the intense resinous odor of this mountain cedar.

Switchbacking up the forested slope, look for life forms that so wonderfully fit these mountain climes. Please stay on the trail! Thin soils on steep slopes are easily washed away if disturbed.

Natural elements and life's adaptations are wonderfully varied. Snow-melt streams crossing the trail create niches for water-loving plants. Note the lushness of dark green mosses. Violets, monkey flowers, wild ginger and the large-leaved, thorny devil's club thrive in these cool, wet places. Look for the rare and delicate maiden-hair fern. Snow avalanche tracks are places of fast growing willows and the tough but limber "slide alder"—permanently bent to the direction of sliding snow.



Mountain Hemlock

Spring flowers—trillium, bleeding heart, and violets—may be found here in mid-summer. A joy of mountain hiking is to discover spring in these high places.

Flower and wildlife checklists are found at the back of this booklet.



The Subalpine Zone

At the end of the switchbacks, nearing 5,000 ft., we are treated to dramatic changes. The forest gives way to fields of heather, blueberry, and an array of flowering plants. Wind-shaped trees huddle together in protective clumps. Shrubs spread out in ground-hugging mats. Here, very little life survives winter elements above the protective cover of snow.

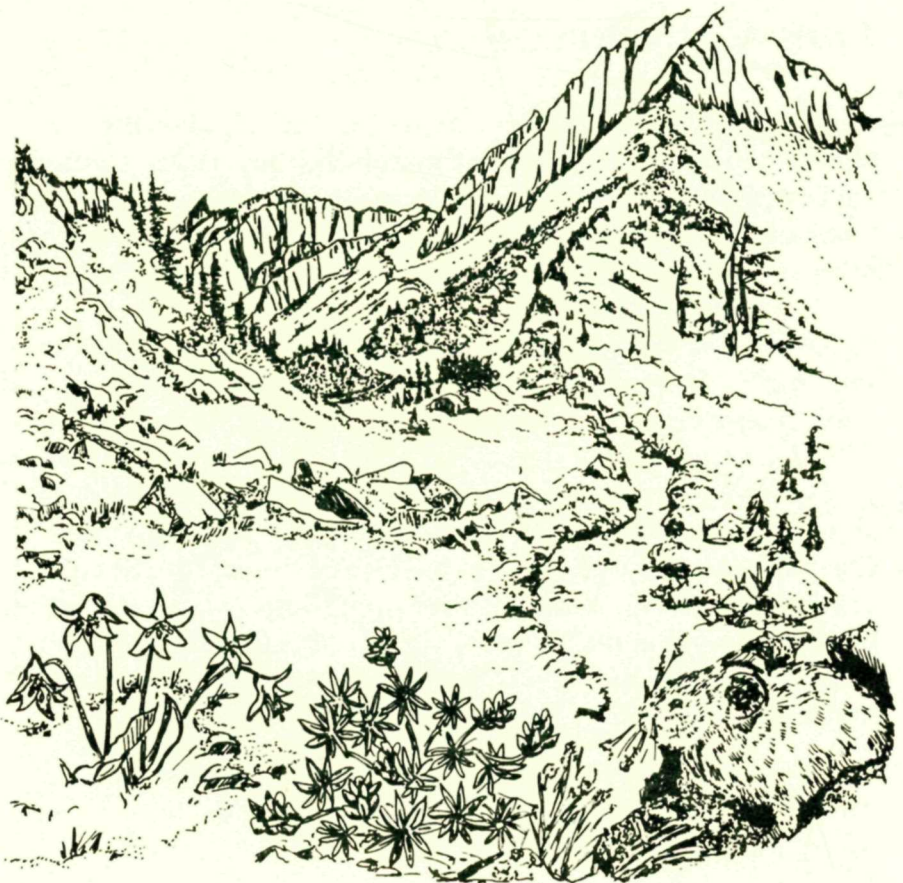
Herbaceous plants shoot up quickly at snow's edge, bursting into bloom. The intensity of color and fragrance, beauty to our senses, lures pollinators so that seeds might ripen before plants wither in late summer's frosts.

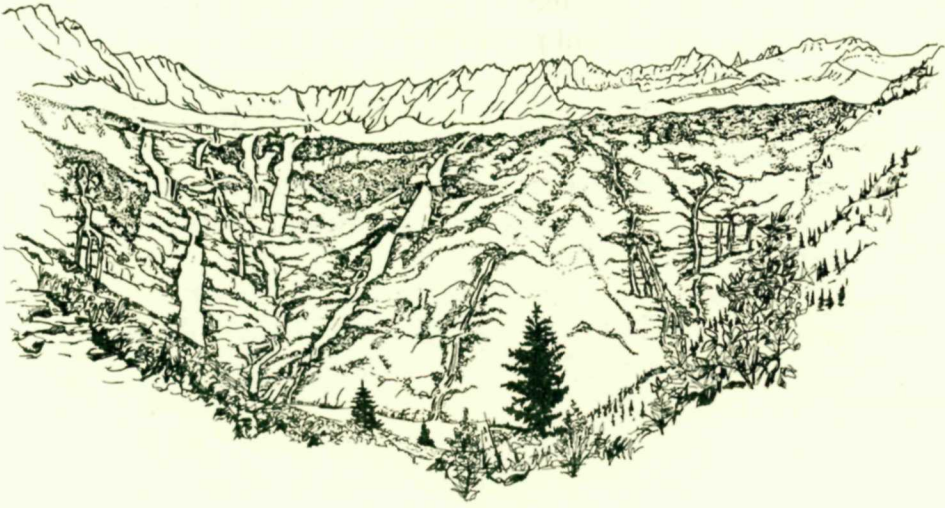
Hoary marmots pose brazenly on rock perches, whistling their alarm. The shy pika emits a plaintive "eek" and vanishes.

Subalpine life has adapted to winter in a variety of ways. Marmots fatten on succulent plants, then enter burrows to hibernate for seven or eight months. The pika, with no tail, short ears, round body, and furry feet, is superbly designed for cold. This busy little "haymaker" dries and stores plants for winter food. The vole keeps snug in its runways just under the snow. The ptarmigan turns white and burrows under snow for warmth and protection.

Here, in the subalpine, long harsh winters make summers short, intense, and beautiful.

Please be careful on the slope below the Pass. The trail may yet hold snow and loosened rocks. A slip off the trail might harm you as well as emerging plants.





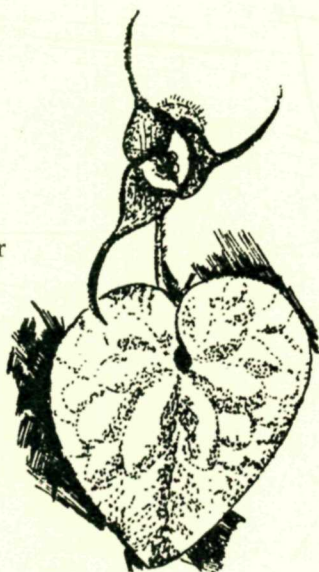
From Cottonwood

From Cottonwood (2,800' elevation), the trail parallels the Stehekin River while climbing through shrubby, richly scented avalanche paths to Basin Creek. A temporary bridge spans Basin Creek in summers. Only well-equipped and experienced hikers should attempt this crossing when the bridge is out.

At 2.4 miles, a side trail ascends steadily for 1.5 miles to Horse-shoe Basin. Thousands of years ago, as climates warmed, a great glacier began to recede from this south-facing mountain massif, leaving this spectacular cirque basin. Many waterfalls plunge and spray over cirque walls from ice and snowfields far above, creating one of the most dramatic scenes in the North Cascades. Miners came here at the turn of the century in an attempt to extract minerals from exposed veins. The old road grade and relics at the "Black Warrior" mine give testament to their determined and mostly futile efforts in this beautiful but harsh environment.

The pass trail continues through rock talus slopes to Doubtful Creek crossing. Here, expect to get your feet wet even when the creek is low. Use special caution during spring runoff or after heavy rains. Fourteen switchbacks through brushy avalanche tracks earn rewards of high ground and panoramic views. After much sun exposure, a mountain hemlock forest and cooling pass breezes give relief to the hiker before the final traverse to the summit.

wild ginger



elephants head



At the Pass

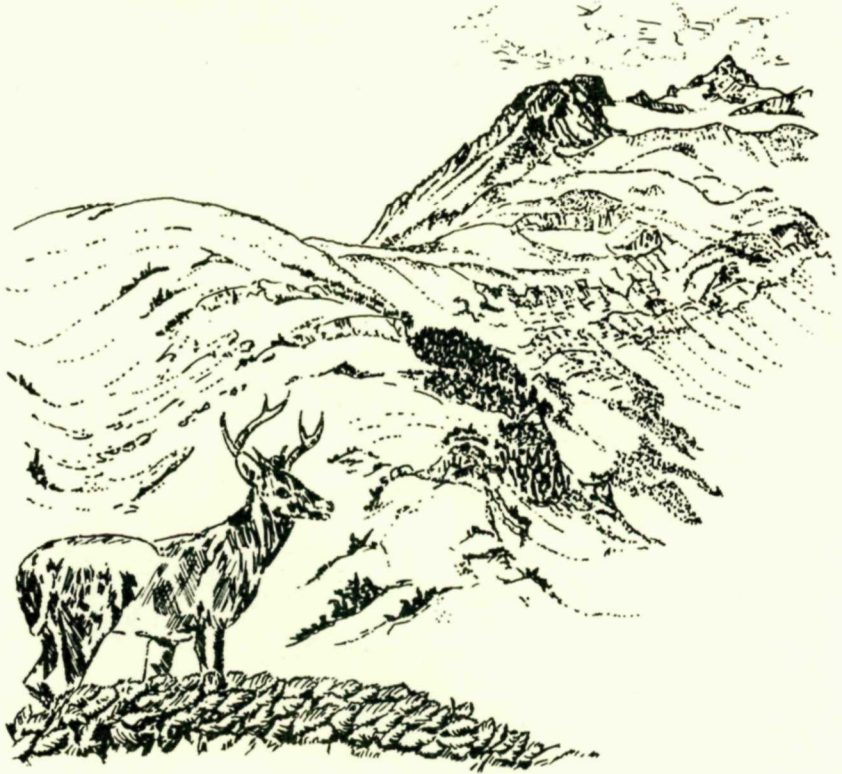
Congratulations, you have reached the summit! Catch your breath and enjoy the view. To the east, McGregor Mt. (8,122 ft.) rises 15 miles away. To the south are Mix-up Peak, Magic Mountain, Yawning Glacier and Pelton Peak. To the North is Sahale Arm extending (beyond our view) to Sahale Peak—with massive glaciers and peaks beyond.

The ground beneath our feet has felt many moccasins and boots. Can you envision those who stood here before us? A beautifully knapped arrow point was found on the pass crest. An ancient rock cairn was found nearby—reminders that we are only a continuum in this mountain experience.

By the 1960s, much of the Pass area was severely eroded—a maze of trail ruts, muddy campsites, fire pits, and latrines. With Cascade Pass a major attraction in the newly established North Cascades National Park (1968), the National Park Service endeavored to restore the area to its natural condition. Through minimum impact education, camping regulations, and a pioneering effort in subalpine revegetation, most of the scars are healing. You are one of thousands who come each year to visit this enchanting place.

And Beyond

While Cascade Pass is a lovely destination, it can also be a beginning to experiences beyond. Many people enjoy the extended cross-pass hike, the bus and boat trip, following that ancient way with relative ease. In contrast, continuing up Mix-up Arm, and on to the Ptarmigan Traverse of the Glacier Peak Wilderness, is a challenge for the most experienced mountaineers.



For a special day hike, the steep trail up Sahale Arm puts one in the midst of natural splendor. In the meadows extending upward to Sahale Glacier, one is surrounded by wildflowers, and is often in the company of deer, marmot, and ptarmigan. Doubtful Lake lies, with lingering ice, a bluegreen gem below. And all around are skyward jutting peaks, hanging glaciers, and cascading water.

Here, as we ascend toward the alpine heights, yellow glacier lilies follow melting snow fields, and ptarmigan chicks tag after their camouflaged mother—who seems totally unconcerned with our human presence.

From this vantage point, one might wonder—will a person visiting the Cascade Pass area one hundred years from now experience the wild beauty we know today, or that which an Indian party found a thousand years ago? Will natural ecosystems endure? While preservation of natural qualities is a clearly defined goal of National Park legislation, the realization of that goal will always be a challenge.

With understanding, care, and commitment, this and many other wild places may be saved—**“Unimpaired for future generations.”**



Have a safe and enjoyable return down the trail! We hope your visit to the Cascade Pass area and the North Cascades National Park has added beauty and inspiration to your life which will extend far beyond these park boundaries.

Mammals of Cascade Pass

trowbridge's shrew

pika

snowshoe hare

mountain beaver

townsend's chipmunk

hoary marmot

cascades golden-mantled ground squirrel

douglas' squirrel

northern flying squirrel

deer mouse

bushy-tailed woodrat

gapper's red-backed vole

heather vole

northern bog lemming

pacific jumping mouse

porcupine

coyote

gray wolf

red fox

black bear

grizzly bear

marten

long-tailed weasel

mink

wolverine

mountain lion

bobcat

elk

mule deer

mountain goat



pika



marmot



townsend's chipmunk

Birds of Cascade Pass Area

This checklist is from species reported in the Cascade Pass Area since 1968. Some species are resident, others are rare or migratory. Please report rare or accidental species to a National Park Ranger. Birds are listed by ornithological classification, like the park's checklist and field guides.

* Common summer birds

Bold type pictured

- Northern Harrier
- Sharp-shinned Hawk
- Cooper's Hawk
- Northern Goshawk
- *Red-tailed Hawk
- Rough-legged Hawk
- Golden Eagle
- ***American Kestrel**
- Merlin
- Peregrine Falcon
- Prairie Falcon
- *Blue Grouse
- ***White-tailed Ptarmigan**
- Solitary Sandpiper
- Spotted Sandpiper



American Kestrel



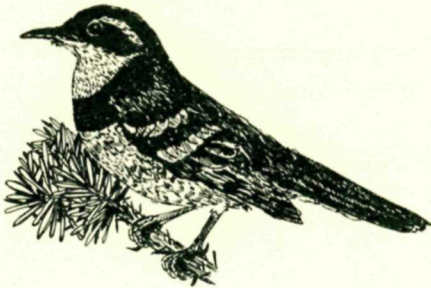
White-tailed Ptarmigan

- Band-tailed Pigeon
- Western Screech-Owl
- Great Horned Owl
- Northern Pygmy-Owl
- Spotted Owl
- Barred Owl
- Great Gray
- *Black Swift
- Vaux's Swift
- *Rufous Hummingbird
- Red-breasted Sapsucker
- Downy Woodpecker
- Hairy Woodpecker
- Northern Flicker

Pileated Woodpecker
 Olive-sided Flycatcher
 Violet-green Swallow
 Cliff Swallow
 Gray Jay
 *Steller's Jay
 *Clark's Nutcracker
 Black-billed Magpie
 *Common Raven
 Mountain Chickadee
 Chestnut-backed Chickadee
 Red-breasted Nuthatch
 Brown Creeper
 Canyon Wren
 *Winter Wren
 Golden-crowned Kinglet
 Mountain Bluebird



Clark's Nutcracker



Varied Thrush

Townsend's Solitaire
 Swainson's Thrush
 *Hermit Thrush
 American Robin
 *Varied Thrush
 American Pipit
 Bohemian Waxwing
 Cedar Waxwing
 Solitary Vireo
 Warbling Vireo
 Yellow-rumped Warbler
 Black-throated Gray
 Warbler
 *Townsend's Warbler
 MacGillivray's Warbler
 Wilson's Warbler
 Western Tanager
 American Tree Sparrow
 Chipping Sparrow
 *Fox Sparrow
 Golden-crowned Sparrow
 White-crowned Sparrow
 *Dark-eyed Junco

Flowers of the Forest

- arnica, heart leaf (y)
- bellflower, scouler's (w)
- bleeding heart (p)
- bunchberry (w)
- calypso orchid (v)
- *columbine (r)**
- coral root orchid (v)
- *cow parsnip (w)
- fairy-bells, Oregon (w)
- false Solomon's Seal (w)
- foamflower (w)
- huckleberry, blue, red
& oval-leaf (p)
- *Indian paintbrush (r)
- *pearly everlasting (w)
- penstemon (y)
- pippsissewa (p)
- pussy-toes (w)



columbine

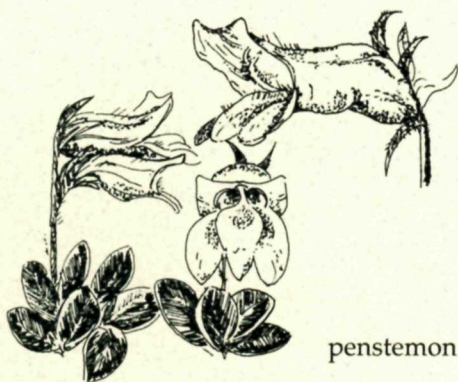


monkey flower

- queen's cup (w)
- rhododendron (w)
- salal (p)
- salmonberry (p)
- solomon's seal, star-flowered (w)
- starflower (w)
- strawberry (w)
- thimbleberry (w)
- trailing rubus (w)
- trillium (w/p)
- twin-flower (p)
- twisted stalk (w)
- *violet (y, b)
- wild ginger (br)
- yarrow (w)
- youth-on-age (g/v)
- wintergreen (p)

Flowers of the Meadow

anemone, western (w)
 arnica, broadleaf (y)
 ash, mountain (w)
 bear-grass (w)
 bistort, American (w)
 buttercup, snow (y)
 cinquefoil, fan-leaf (y)
 coltsfoot, alpine (v)
 daisy (y,v)
 erigonium (y)
 fireweed, alpine (v)
 gentian, mt.bog (b)
 glacier lily (y)
 grass of parnassus (w)
 heather (y,r,w)
 *hellebore, green false (g)
 *Jacob's ladder (b)



penstemon



phlox

larkspur (b)
 *lupine (b)
 miterwort, Brewers (y/w/g)
 ***monkey flower (p,y)**
 partridge foot (w)
penstemon(p)
phlox, spreading (p)
 saxifrage, alpine (w)
 spirea, mountain (p)
 *spring beauty (w)
 valerian, Sitka (w)
 veronica (b)
 willow-herb (y)

*Indicates common plant, found in open or forest habitats

Color key: y=yellow, w=white, g=green, b=blue, p=pink,
 r=red, v=violet, br=brown

"To conserve the
scenery and the natural and historic objects...

and the wildlife therein....

and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner
and by such means as will leave them
unimpaired for future generations."

Act of Congress, October 2, 1968



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