

Moon Point

Location & Map

T23S.R3E.S25; Warner Mountain

Difficulty

Easy

Distance

2.2 miles round trip

Elevation gain

200 feet (5100'–5140')

Peak bloom

early June to early August, peak in July

Highlights

Large meadows, butterflies, rare plants

Directions

Drive 2 miles east of Oakridge on Hwy. 58 and turn right onto Kitson Springs County Road. After .5 mile turn right onto Rd 21. Follow Rd 21 for 18.7 miles around the reservoir to Youngs Creek Rd 2129. Turn left on 2129 and, following the signs for the look-out, continue for 8 miles on 2129 then turn right (uphill) on 439. The trailhead and small pullout is 1.5 miles farther on the right.

For an easy day of botanizing and watching butterflies, head up to Moon Point. The short, relatively level trail passes by numerous floriferous meadows and smaller open areas that attract a multitude of butterflies and hummingbirds on sunny, summer days. Areas of forest, creek, alder thicket, rock outcrop and an off-trail pond contribute to the high diversity of species. Keep your eyes open in search of interesting plants from the moment you step out of your car. The first of masses of the butterfly favorite horsemint grows right along the road and hairy arnica blooms in mid-July by the first couple of steps of the trail. Within a few minutes a small wet area appears on the right. To get a look at the rare, late-blooming leopard lily as well as bog orchids and monkshood, walk out onto a large log above the bog. The small off-trail Moon Lake can be seen through the trees from here. The narrow trail continues on through various habitats. By July, the vegetation is so lush in places it can be somewhat overgrown. There are a number of species of currants, salmonberries and other shrubs as well as skyrockets, tall bluebells, alpine knotweed and lupines. After 3/4 mile, the top of the Youngs Rock trail begins to the left. The meadow between the trails is an excellent place to look for the green-flowered ginger and also contains many Baker's violets and the fringe-flowered, Siskiyou false hellebore. Continuing to the right, the trail soon emerges from a short stretch of woods into a large sloping meadow. In early June glacier lilies bloom here, but by late June it is filled with Sitka valerian and in July you can see pink owl-clover and tongue-leaved luina. A short stretch of woods follows the meadow until the trail reaches a small opening ringed with oceanspray. Look here for a patch of the rare, tiny-flowered kelloggia. The trail now makes a short, steep dip before unexpectedly breaking out to a view at the top of cliff-edged Moon Point. While only a small area of rock is safely accessible, a surprising number of species inhabit this area including silverback luina, Cascade fleabane, cliff and frosted paintbrushes, and an unusual, bonsai-like Ponderosa pine.



In July, the meadows along the Moon Point trail are overflowing with abundant wildflowers such as Alice's fleabane, scarlet paintbrush and broadleaf lupine.



Green-flowered wild ginger (*Asarum wagneri*) is a rare species found only in the southern part of the Cascades. Despite being at the very northern end of this small range, it is abundant, though well hidden, in the meadows of Moon Point. It has very wide, floppy leaves and green flowers with short, bent tails.