

Native Plant Spotlight by Krys Kirkwood

Cerastium arvense – Field Chickweed (Caryophyllaceae)



This is a common early spring-early summer perennial that grows 4-10 inches in height. It can be found growing in dry ground on rocky slopes, outcrops, grassy bluffs, meadows, screes, gravelly openings, and clearings; from low to high elevations, but usually below timberline. It is tufted or clumped with greyish-green foliage, sometimes forming mats. The flowers are white, with deeply lobed petals of 5. There are a couple other native chickweeds that look similar to field chickweed that grow in either Vancouver and Queen Charlotte islands area (*C. Fischerianum*) or higher mountain areas (*C. beeringianum*).

Castilleja hispida – Harsh Paintbrush (Scrophulariaceae)



Harsh paintbrush is a common, early summer perennial herb that grows from a woody base. The stems are clustered, erect to ascending, usually unbranched and having many bristly hairs. It can grow 8-24 inches in height, and can be found in grassy slopes, dry meadows, forest openings and edges; at low to middle elevations. The actual flowers are greenish, 3/4"-1 1/2" long, partly concealed by the bracts that are bright scarlet (sometimes yellow), broad, and deeply 3-5 lobed. Harsh paintbrush is similar to both common paintbrush (*C. miniata*) and cliff paintbrush (*C. rupicola*).

I strongly urge leaving any of our native plants undisturbed. Enjoy them in their natural environment. Seek out nurseries and professionals who sell and/or deal with natives if you are wanting to add any to your garden.

- Photos: Krys Kirkwood
- Reference: Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast by Pojar and Mackinnon

Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest by Mark Turner and Phyllis Gustafson