

# THE EVOLUTION OF *Floral Diversity*

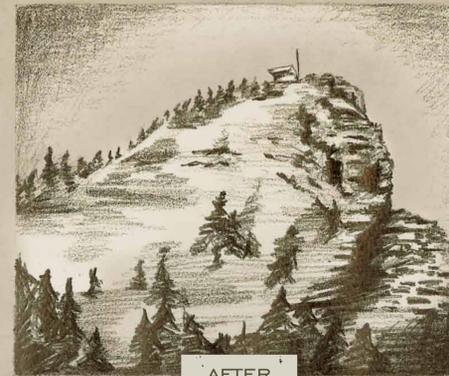
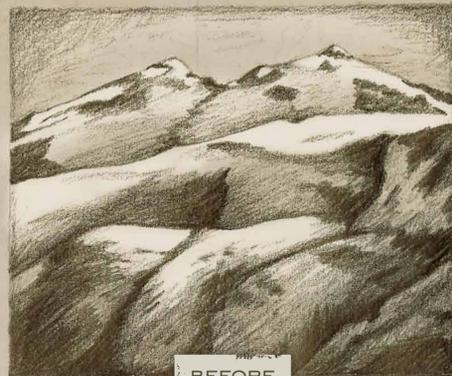


Over 300 species of flowering plants call Iron Mountain home. Its unique geologic history and location create a variety of soil types and microclimates that allow for greater plant diversity.

The dry meadows found on the south side of the mountain tend to host the showiest flowers, ranging in color and size. Plants such as thimbleberry and cone-flower thrive on other parts of the mountain where there are deeper, wetter soils. Still, other plants find ways to grow among the rocky cliffs by staying low to the ground and out of the wind.

## ▶ Help protect the plants that live here:

- Stay on the trail
- Leave flowers for others to enjoy



## ◀ A Landscape Shaped by the Movement of Ice

Over 6 million years ago, Iron Mountain was a massive volcano. There is evidence of over 60 lava flows on the mountain. In the last two million years, several massive ice sheets have come and retreated removing much of the volcanic strata. Olivine, a mineral composed of magnesium and iron, gives the rocks their reddish color. Years of erosion have formed diverse habitats that are needed to provide the brilliant showcase of flowers that appear here each spring.



### Scarlet Gilia

IPOMOPSIS AGGREGATA

The bright red flowers displayed by Scarlet Gilia are adapted to attract hummingbirds. As summer wanes and the hummingbirds leave, the flowers turn from red to pink and sometimes white. This invites other pollinators, such as hawkmoths, which extends the time the flowers are pollinated.

### Thompson's Mistmaiden

ROMANZOFFIA THOMPSONII

This tiny annual has small, white flowers and grows on south-facing, open seeps. It completes its lifecycle in less than two months, after which the seeds lay dormant until the snow melts the following spring.