

### 3. Skills Challenge: Plant Identification

Identifying plants is an important job in rangeland management and knowing what plants are growing where is a primary factor when making land management decisions. Land managers work closely with botanists (botanists study plants and how they work) to make sure they identify plants correctly. Once they know what the plant is, they can then explore ways to manipulate them to achieve the goals on the rangelands.

Identifying plants can be a challenge but with practices it can also be fun! Identification starts with observing the plant characteristics—as described above—and then distinguishing between different plants. Every plant is unique, the questions is, can you find how they are unique?

#### Do:

Study the plants from the plant list (on the next page). Learning to identify plants by sights is an excellent skills to have! Links to herbarium mounts for each plant can be found at [idrange.org](http://idrange.org)

#### Plant Apps (available on Apple and Android products)



Idaho Wildflowers Search



Idaho Grasses



PictureThis

#### Words to Explore\*:

- **Herbaceous:** Non-woody plant growth
- **Monitor:** The orderly collection, analysis, and interpretation of resource data to evaluate progress toward meeting management objectives. This process must be conducted over time in order to determine whether or not management objectives are being met.
- **Morphology:** The form and structure of an organism, with special emphasis on external features.
- **Woody:** A term used in reference to trees, shrubs or browse that characteristically contain persistent ligneous material.

\*Definitions from the Society for Range Management Glossary of Terms

#### Additional Resources

- Visit the <https://idrange.org/education-2/i-roam-curriculum/> for each topic to see videos and other additional educational links and materials.
- Visit: [plants.usda.gov](http://plants.usda.gov) for more information on each plant.

## I-ROAM Plant List

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	GROWTH		
		FORM	LIFE SPAN	ORIGIN
<b>Grass and Grass-like</b>				
1. Baltic Rush	<i>Juncus balticus</i>	Grass-like	Perennial	Native
2. Basin Wildrye	<i>Leymus cinereus</i>	Grass	Perennial	Native
3. Bluebunch Wheatgrass	<i>Pseudoroegneria spicata</i>	Grass	Perennial	Native
4. Cheatgrass (or Downy Brome)	<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	Grass	Annual	Introduced
5. Crested Wheatgrass	<i>Agropyron cristatum</i>	Grass	Perennial	Introduced
6. Elk Sedge	<i>Carex garberi</i>	Grass-like	Perennial	Native
7. Foxtail Barley	<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>	Grass	Perennial	Native
8. Idaho Fescue	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>	Grass	Perennial	Native
9. Indian Ricegrass	<i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i>	Grass	Perennial	Native
10. Kentucky Bluegrass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Grass	Perennial	Introduced
11. Medusahead Rye	<i>Taeniatherum caput-medusae</i>	Grass	Annual	Introduced
12. Needle-and-Thread	<i>Hesperostipa comata</i>	Grass	Perennial	Native
13. Purple Threeawn	<i>Aristida purpurea</i>	Grass	Perennial	Native
14. Sandberg Bluegrass	<i>Poa secunda</i>	Grass	Perennial	Native
15. Squirreltail	<i>Elymus elymoides</i>	Grass	Perennial	Native
<b>Forbs</b>				
16. Arrowleaf Balsamroot	<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	Forb	Perennial	Native
17. Curlycup Gumweed	<i>Grindelia squarrosa</i>	Forb	Perennial	Native
18. Goathead (or puncturevine)	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>	Forb	Annual	Introduced
19. Indian Paintbrush	<i>Castilleja sp.</i>	Forb	Perennial	Native
20. Lupine	<i>Lupinus sp.</i>	Forb	Perennial	Native
21. Russian Thistle (or Tumbleweed)	<i>Salsola tragus</i>	Forb	Annual	Introduced
22. Segó Lily	<i>Calochortus nuttallii</i>	Forb	Perennial	Native
23. Tall Larkspur	<i>Delphinium occidentale</i>	Forb	Perennial	Native
24. Tapertip Hawksbeard	<i>Crepis acuminata</i>	Forb	Perennial	Native
25. Western Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Forb	Perennial	Native
26. Wild Onion	<i>Allium sp.</i>	Forb	Perennial	Native
<b>Woody</b>				
27. Antelope Bitterbrush	<i>Purshia tridentata</i>	Woody	Perennial	Native
28. Big Sagebrush	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i>	Woody	Perennial	Native
29. Curl-leaf Mountain Mahogany	<i>Cercocarpus ledifolius</i>	Woody	Perennial	Native
30. Juniper (Utah, Rocky Mountain, or Western)	<i>Juniperus sp.</i>	Woody	Perennial	Native
31. Quaking Aspen	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Woody	Perennial	Native
32. Rabbitbrush (gray or rubber)	<i>Chrysothamnus sp.</i>	Woody	Perennial	Native
<b>Noxious Weeds</b>				
33. Canada Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Forb	Perennial	Introduced
34. Hoary Cress (or Whitetop)	<i>Cardaria draba</i>	Forb	Perennial	Introduced
35. Rush Skeletonweed	<i>Chondrilla juncea</i>	Forb	Perennial	Introduced
36. Spotted Knapweed	<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>	Forb	Perennial	Introduced