

## FUN FACTS

### TWO TAILED SWALLOWTAIL BUTTERFLY



photo by David James

The Two Tailed Swallowtail Butterfly (scientific name *Papilio multicaudata*) is one of the most commonly-found butterflies at Cowiche Canyon. The swallowtail butterfly uses chokecherry as a host plant to lay its eggs. Once the eggs hatch, the caterpillars rely on the chokecherry for food. Different butterflies have a different number of “instar” stages, which are growth stages during which caterpillars' exoskeletons change. Two Tailed Swallowtail Butterflies have 5 different instars.

Adult swallowtail butterflies get nectar from thistles and milkweeds using their long tube-like tongue, called a proboscis. These butterflies are found in the spring at Cowiche Canyon. (*bentler.us*)

### PONDEROSA PINE TREE



photo by Jo Miles

At Cowiche Canyon you can find the big ponderosa pine tree or *Pinus ponderosa* (scientific name). This pine tree can grow to be 150 to 180 feet tall and 3 to 4 feet in diameter. Ponderosas provide food and shelter for a wide variety of birds. The ponderosa pine trees grow in the Columbia basin at lower elevations and are adapted to wildfires. They are tolerant to high and low temperatures. They stand between the forest and grassland, separating the two different lands. (*bentler.us*)

Did you know pine trees produce two types of pine cones? They produce woody female cones and grainy male cones. The female cones contain the seeds that allow the trees to reproduce. The female cones are formed on the upper half of the foliage while the males grow on the lower branches. Ponderosa pine trees contain very long needles that come in groups of three. (*ehow.com*)

## BALSAMROOT



The Balsamroot flower or *Balsamorhiza sagittata* (scientific name) is known as the Oregon sunflower and is indeed a member of the sunflower family. This plant is drought tolerant, winter hardy, and fire resistant. It can regenerate its leaves and flowers. The arrow-shaped leaves as well as the whole stem are covered with small white hairs.

Balsamroot is a popular food for wildlife animals. This plant was used by Native Americans as medicine to treat toothaches, the roots were used to make coffee, and the seeds were gathered to make flour. Each spring you can see these flowers bloom at Cowiche Canyon. (*wta.org*)

## EASTER ISLAND FACES



photo by David Hagen

Have you noticed these these faces on your hike? These are the Easter Island Faces, which got their name for their resemblance to the faced statues in Chile. The Rapa Nui National Park on Easter Island in Chile has carved statues that weigh up to 14 tons and reach up to 13 feet tall. These statues were carved by the Rapa Nui people, who where the first settlers of the island. (*nationalgeographic.com*)

This natural rock formation was created over 14 million years ago. As layer upon layer of molten lava slowly flows and cools, it creates unique formations of basalt rock. Basalt, a dense crystalline lava, covers more than 100,000 square miles of Washington, Oregon, and part of Idaho. The rocks get their rich red color from the iron inside the basalt. (*cr.nps.gov*)

## RED-OISER DOGWOOD



photo by Nancia Huato

The Red-Osier Dogwood or *Cornus Stolonifera* (scientific name) can adapt to many types of soil. It's used in wetland soils for restoration because of its ability to spread quickly. The dogwood can grow up to 10 feet high and 12 feet in width. During the spring the Red-Osier Dogwood blooms with white flowers and in the late summer it produces berries from which birds feed. ([pnwplants.wsu.edu](http://pnwplants.wsu.edu))

The Red-Osier Dogwood can tolerate extremely cold temperatures. Its bright red-colored stem stands out more in the snow during the winter. This plant can also survive light fires because its roots underground can eventually sprout again. It is unable to survive severe fires because its roots can be burned to the point that they are unable to sprout. ([rook.org](http://rook.org))

## PYGMY SHORT-HORNED LIZARD



photo by Judith Jellman

The Short-Horned Lizard (scientific name *Phrynosoma douglasii*) is most likely to be seen in late March at Cowiche Canyon. Female short-horned lizards are always larger than the males. Their dorsal patterns can vary between yellow, tan, and gray. Underneath they are usually white. Their diet includes a variety of insects such as beetles, moths, spiders, and even termites. Mostly, though, they eat ants.

They are usually found on rocks, grasslands, sandy lands, and on loose soil that they can burrow into. They run very quickly, but for only short distances, making their camouflage more useful for hiding from predators. ([Dnr.wa.org](http://Dnr.wa.org))

## SAGE



photo by Nancia Huato

Sagebrush is tolerant to high and low temperatures, small amounts of water, and can also withstand heavy winds. It is a habitat for many species such as birds, mammals, reptiles, and insects. All these species depend on sagebrush for survival. Sagebrush is a key component of the shrub-steppe in Washington. (*science-ed.pnnl.gov*)

In Washington state, less than half of the original shrub-steppe remains because of the changes in land use, such as dry land agriculture, irrigation to expand farming, and residential development. The shrub-steppe is the most dominant ecosystem, supporting a wide diversity of wildlife. (*wdfw.wa.gov*)

## LICHEN



photo by Nancia Huato

Lichen is a formation of “symbiosis,” which is a combination of two different life forms that provide services for each other. Lichen is a partnership between algae and fungi. The algae uses photosynthesis to make its own food and provides nutrients for the fungus. The fungus, in turn, provides a way for the algae to live out of water. (*herbarium.usu.edu*)

Because of its complexity, lichen is described as a “small ecosystem.” The fungus will influence the shape of the lichen. There are 4 different shapes of lichen: foliose, crustose, fruticose, and squamulose, all of which can be found at Cowiche Canyon. (*herbarium.usu.edu*)

## LUPINE



Lupine can grow from 12 inches up to 26 inches in dry open fields. It has bonnet-shaped flowers that grow at the top of the plant's stalk. Its flowers bloom in many colors, including dark blue, purple, pink, yellow, white, and lavender; the most common color in Cowiche Canyon is blue. The seeds are flat and are found inside a pod which can be about one inch long and is full of small hairs.

([depts.washington.edu](http://depts.washington.edu))

## LUCIA BLUE



photo by David Hagen

The Lucia Blue butterfly (scientific name *celastrina lucia*), as an adult, deposits eggs on unopened red-osier dogwood flower buds. This butterfly has four instars (growing phases). The lucia blue larvae eat buds and young leaves from the red-osier dogwood. The adult butterfly moves to forested or into a shrub-steppe habitat. In the Cowiche canyon Conservancy you will usually find the Lucia Blue during the first weeks of April. (by: James, David.)

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