

COLUMBIA-CASCADES

Rare Flower Research

The Mt. Mazama collomia is one of the most beautiful and rare wildflowers in Crater Lake National Park, Oregon. Concerns over its vulnerability and long-term viability prompted the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service to join with scientists from the University of Idaho to gain informa-

tion on the ecology of the species. Last summer, scientists worked with volunteers to locate collomia populations and track its population trends and reproductive success.

The research was supported by a generous grant from Canon U.S.A. through the "Expedition Into Parks" program of the National Park Foundation (NPF), an official nonprofit partner of the National Park Service. Dedicated to helping meet the needs of the 367 national park system units, the foundation was chartered by congress in 1967 to channel private resources into the parks. The National Park Foundation awards \$2 million in grants each year to support education, visitor services, and volunteer activities that preserve and enhance the parks.

As a result of our studies, we have discovered new populations of collomia and gained new insights into its habitat requirements. We also found that populations of the wildflower in Crater Lake National Park are genetically different from those outside of the park. This means that plants found in the park contain valuable and unique genetic resources not found in other portions of its range.

Once again, Canon U.S.A. has funded continued research and restoration of Mt. Mazama collomia at Crater Lake through a NPF grant. Using the genetic information gained in our initial research, scientists from the University of Idaho will evaluate the physical and biological factors necessary to successfully restore collomia. Eventually, scientists, volunteers, and park staff will come together to establish experimental populations in areas where it once grew in the park.