



Klamath Network Featured Creature

October 2013

Scarlet gilia (*Ipomopsis aggregata*)

General Description:

The Lewis and Clark expedition collected the first specimen of scarlet gilia, along the Lolo trail in northern Idaho in 1806. Scarlet gilia has bright green, pinnately lobed leaves, with a showy display of deep pink to bright red trumpet-shaped flowers. Originally called *Cantua aggregata*, scarlet gilia has been classified under more than eight different genera within Polemoniaceae (the phlox family). There are three species of scarlet gilia with 7-10 different sub-species. The name *Ipomopsis* comes from the Greek words for "striking appearance". The species name *aggregata* is from the Latin "brought together", referring to the cluster of flowers.

Habitat:

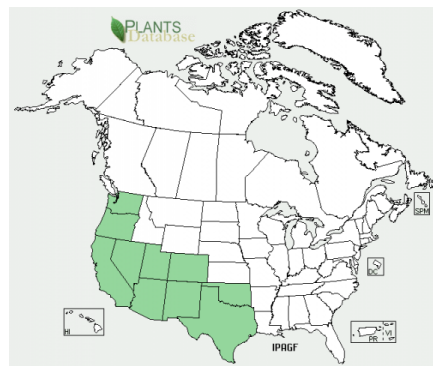
Scarlet gilia requires little water and is found in a variety of habitats, from mountain meadows to desert canyons, in dry, sandy, loamy, and igneous soils.



Photo: <http://www.swcoloradowildflowers.com>

Ecology:

The trumpet-shaped blooms attract hummingbirds and moths. Scarlet gilia blooms from May through August. Flowers emerging early in the season are red, attracting hummingbirds; whereas flowers blooming later in the season are lighter in color and are pollinated by moths. Considered a short-lived perennial herb, individual plants may persist for several years as a rosette of basal leaves, before producing flowers, and dying after flowering once.



<http://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=ipag>

Distribution:

This striking wildflower is common in the western US, from Oregon to Southern California; east to western Texas; north through the Rocky mountains and the western edge of the plains to western North Dakota; as well as Mexico.

Where to Find in the Klamath Network Parks:

Scarlet gilia can be found in open woodlands and meadows in Crater Lake and Lassen Volcanic National Parks.



Photo: ©2003 Norman Jensen

References and Further Reading:

http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=IPAG

http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/plant-of-the-week/ipomopsis_aggregata.shtml



Photo: © 2010 Keir Morse