



Map created with **TOPO!** ©2007 National Geographic

# Mt. Fremont Lookout

Mt. Fremont Lookout is an outstanding hike to see many of the flowering alpine plants of Mount Rainier National Park. The best time in normal years would be July and August (narrowed further to mid-July to mid-August for optimum flower viewing). All the flowers are easily viewable from the trail so there's no need to meander except at the lookout site. Remember: *take only pictures, leave only tracks (on the trail)*.

**Sunrise to Frozen Lake Trail Junctions:** The route, shown in green, is *approximately 1.55 mi., +445', -84'*. While the hike begins at Frozen Lake the access hike from Sunrise along Sourdough Ridge provides a great opportunity to view many special plants along the way such as the Tongue-leaf Rainiera. One cluster of Elmera can also be found growing at the base of the retaining wall within .25 mi. from Frozen Lake.

**Frozen Lake to Lookout :** The route, shown in red, is *approximately 1.33 mi., +557', -194', net gain +363', average grade 12%, steepest grade 15%*. While appearing rocky and barren the trail edges present superb alpine flora and the views of The Mountain on the return trip are utterly astonishing! Enjoy!

**1<sup>st</sup> Leg:** A short flat section along the west side of Frozen Lake provides great viewing of plants common to the pumice flats. These are usually low growing clumps.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Leg:** The long steady traverse up the west slope of Mt. Fremont is full of surprises. Rock crevices provide great habitat for the incredible Elegant Jacob's Ladder, seen here in great abundance; as well as the King's Crown, rarely seen elsewhere in the Park.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Leg:** Rock outcroppings at the lookout site provide a slightly different habitat and include alpine firs. Look for Yellow-dot Saxifrage south of and facing the lookout.

**Guides and Map:** Hike 28 in Spring/Manning *50 Hikes in Mount Rainier National Park* (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Hike 40 in Judd's *Day Hike! Mount Rainier*, and Hike 25 in Nelson's *Day Hiking Mount Rainier*. Greens Trails Maps, No. 270, Mount Rainier East, WA.

**Distance and Difficulty:** Distance round trip is approximately 5.7 miles with an elevation gain of approximately 800 feet with some up and down gain/loss. The guide books generally refer to the difficulty as "moderate." This is truly a relative term and the hike can present challenges. Even hikers in good shape may be surprised at their winded condition just after the first .25 mile to Sourdough Ridge. The hike begins at 6,400' elevation and some time will be necessary for acclimation, particularly if coming from a low elevation. Heavy or late snow years may mean lingering snow on the trail (and fewer flowers) which makes trekking more difficult.

**Preparation:** The hike is in an alpine environment which can produce unexpected hazardous conditions including wind, rain, cold, and whiteouts, as well as dehydrating extreme sunlight and heat (possibly all in the same day!). The entire hike is in the open, so if its hot be prepared with sun screen and twice the water normally carried. The *Ten Essentials* are always a good idea. The trail is well maintained and heavily used but has its share of rocks and ankle twisters so good footwear is important. And yes, bugs! Normally bugs are not a major problem but in years with late springs the mosquitoes at the lookout site can be intense – so be forewarned!

**Weather Forecast:** [http://www.atmos.washington.edu/data/rainier\\_report.html](http://www.atmos.washington.edu/data/rainier_report.html)

**Trail Conditions:** <http://www.nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit/trails-and-backcountry-camp-conditions.htm>

**Ranger Station:** White River Wilderness Information Center, (360) 569-2211, x6030

## INDEX OF FLOWERS SHOWN ON MAP:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 - Tongue-leaf Rainiera, <i>Rainiera stricta</i>            | 13 - Mountain Sorrel, <i>Oxyria digyna</i>               |
| 2 - Shrubby Cinquefoil, <i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>          | 14 - Lance-leaf Stonecrop, <i>Sedum rupicola</i>         |
| 3 - Common Harebell, <i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>           | 15 - King's Crown, <i>Sedum integrifolium</i>            |
| 4 - Alpine Lupine, <i>Lupinus lepidus</i> var. <i>lobbii</i> | 16 - Spreading Phlox, <i>Phlox diffusa</i>               |
| 5 - Pale Agoseris, <i>Agoseris glauca</i>                    | 17 - Northern Goldenrod, <i>Solidago multiradiata</i>    |
| 6 - Nodding Arnica, <i>Arnica parryi</i>                     | 18 - Alpine Colomia, <i>Collomia debilis</i>             |
| 7 - Pussypaws, <i>Calyptridium umbellatum</i>                | 19 - Tolmie Saxifrage, <i>Saxifraga tolmiei</i>          |
| 8 - Cascade Catchfly, <i>Silene suksdorfii</i>               | 20 - Cliff Paintbrush, <i>Castilleja rupicola</i>        |
| 9 - Alpine Buckwheat, <i>Eriogonum pyrolifolium</i>          | 21 - Alpine Aster, <i>Aster alpigenus</i>                |
| 10 - Sickletop Lousewort, <i>Pedicularis racemosa</i>        | 22 - Small-flowered Penstemon, <i>Penstemon procerus</i> |
| 11 - Boreal Sandwort, <i>Minuartia rubella</i>               | 23 - Yellow-dot Saxifrage, <i>Saxifraga bronchialis</i>  |
| 12 - Elegant Jacob's Ladder, <i>Polemonium elegans</i>       | 24 - Alpine Golden Daisy, <i>Erigeron aureus</i>         |

Trail notes, other flowers observed, highlights:

Date of hike: / /