



August 31, 1805
Tower Creek Pyramids

“...Encamped in Some old lodges at the place the road leaves the Creek and assends the high Country... passed remarkable rock resembling Pirimids on the Left Side...”

WILLIAM CLARK

1805 — After satisfying themselves that they would be unable to follow a route along the Salmon River to reach the Pacific Ocean, the expedition headed up Tower Creek to Lost Trail Pass on its way to the Bitterroot Valley. Along the Salmon River and its tributary streams the Captains noted a variety of plants, including red hawthorn, several willows, Oregon grape, Rocky Mountain honeysuckle, Cascade mountain-ash, and Lyell’s angelica. Both Lewis and Clark observed that the Lemhi Shoshone Indians displayed a great reliance on roots, tubers and berries.

Native Plant Species

Yampah

height: 32 inches
habitat: Open forests, grassy slopes, mid-elevation meadows

Clark observed “...the Indian women collecting the root of a species of fennel which grows in the moist grounds and feeding their poor starving children...; the flavor of this root is not unlike that of anisseed.”



Perideridia gairdneri

Dusky Willow

height: 15 to 20 feet
habitat: Stream banks, flood plains

The lodges Lewis, Clark and their men stayed in on Tower Creek were very likely made of woven willow. While not specifically described by Clark, these lodges were probably similar to the “small conic lodges formed with willow brush” Lewis mentions on August 12.



Salix exigua

Syringa or Lewis’s Mock Orange

height: Up to 12 feet
habitat: Open forests, forest edges, seasonally moist draws

Idaho’s state flower. Fragrant, showy white flowers. The strong, hard branches were used by Native Americans for bows and arrows and infant cradles.



Philadelphus lewisii

Lewis & Clark at the Tower Creek “Pirimids”



Idaho artist Barbara Peets portrays Meriwether Lewis, William Clark and interpreter George Drouillard as they come upon the Tower Creek “Pirimids” on August 31, 1805. The Corps of Discovery camped about a mile north of the pyramids that evening.

Today — As you travel up the Tower Creek drainage, you will observe invading plant species like spotted knapweed, leafy spurge and rush skeletonweed that were not in Idaho when Lewis and Clark passed through this country in 1805. The non-native plant species we find today at many locations in Lemhi County were spread by unsuspecting travelers along waterways, roads and hiking trails. Wildlife, livestock, and pets transport seeds on their coats. People carry them on their clothing, shoe treads, boat bottoms, and vehicle undercarriages and tires.

Once introduced, invading species thrive in Idaho’s climate. Spotted knapweed invades disturbed sites and releases chemical substances that inhibit other plant growth. Leafy spurge adapts to many habitats and spreads by seed dispersal and its long-reaching root system. Both leafy spurge and rush skeletonweed produce a milky latex that is an irritant to people and animals. Invasive plants out-compete native plants and reduce wildlife habitat. You can help protect pristine areas from invading species by not walking or driving through infestations and by washing your clothing, gear, and vehicles between site visits.

Invading Weed Species

Spotted Knapweed

height: 1 to 4 feet
habitat: Various
Each plant produces up to 1,000 seeds that may remain viable for 8 years. Very uncommon in Lemhi County prior to 1980. Today, in spite of costly control efforts, knapweed is spreading rapidly.



Centaurea maculosa

Rush Skeletonweed

height: 1 to 4 feet
habitat: Very dry to very wet sites
The plant appears leafless at a distance. The seed bears a soft white plume and is wind dispersed. Small yellow flowers scattered among the branches from mid-summer to fall. A recent invader in Lemhi County.



Chondrilla juncea

Leafy Spurge

height: Up to 3 feet
habitat: Rangelands and pastures
Its yellow-green color makes this plant easy to spot in the spring and summer. Ripe seed capsules rupture when touched, throwing seeds as far as 15 feet. Introduced insect predators are proving helpful in the control of dense infestations.



Euphorbia esula



www.bpeets.com
www.idahoweedawareness.org
www.idahoweedcontrol.org
www.agri.state.id.us/
www.fs.fed.us/r4/projects/noxious_weeds/

Lemhi County Weed Management Area Working Group
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This educational message is a cooperative project funded by the U.S. Forest Service, Lemhi County Weed Management Area, Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Weed Awareness Campaign, Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission, Montana’s Statewide Noxious Weed Awareness and Education Campaign. Other cooperators include Lemhi County Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Committee, City of Salmon, Lemhi & Custer County Agricultural Agencies, Idaho Department of Fish & Game.

Try your hand at coloring Barbara Peet's images of native plants and noxious weeds

Native Dusky Willow
Pale yellow-green
flowers. Twigs are
red-brown. Leaves
green above, paler
below.



PEET'S



**Noxious Spotted
Knapweed**
Flowers are usually pinkish-
purple. Bracts under the
flowers have dark spots.



PEET'S

**Noxious Rush
Skeletonweed**
Yellow flowers grow at
ends of dark green,
nearly leafless stems.



Noxious Leafy Spurge
Showy yellow-green,
heart-shaped bracts
surround tiny flowers
of the same color.

Native Lewis's Mock Orange
Also called Syringa
Showy white flowers with
bright yellow stamens
smell like citrus.



PEET'S

s	a	w	i	l	l	o	w	b	c	x	u
p	k	c	t	o	w	r	u	s	h	e	s
o	x	e	c	d	z	f	k	y	g	u	l
t	y	h	l	g	j	r	q	r	o	p	h
t	a	v	a	e	a	x	u	i	p	y	k
e	m	x	r	l	t	p	x	n	o	r	n
d	p	n	c	y	s	o	o	g	s	a	a
w	a	d	f	u	n	j	n	a	m	m	p
i	h	a	i	d	a	h	o	w	s	i	w
r	e	w	o	t	r	o	o	t	e	d	e
l	e	w	i	s	n	a	t	i	v	e	e
s	a	l	m	o	n	r	i	v	e	r	d

Find these words in this noxious weed wordscramble:

- | | | | |
|--------|--------------|---------|----------|
| rush | skeletonweed | leafy | spurge |
| tower | pyramid | native | noxious |
| lodge | willow | spotted | knapweed |
| lewis | clark | syringa | yampah |
| salmon | river | root | idaho |

Native Yampah
Small white flowers in
clusters. Plant smells
like dill.



PEET'S