



Star Lily (Melanthiaceae Family)

Toxicoscordion fremontii, blooms February to March

Also known as Star of Zigadene and Death Camus, Star Lily is widespread, and grows in wooded and brushy slopes, and in grassland. You can find it in Mount Burdell Open Space at the San Carlos entrance.

Leaves, flowers and bulbs are all very poisonous!

A related Marin species is the Marsh Zigadene, which blooms in May and June in serpentine wetlands.

The Maidu Indians used the Star Lily to cause vomiting, and as a poultice for bruises and snake bites. The Modoc Indians leeched out the poison and ate the bulb.

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Owl's Clover (Orobanche Family)

Castilleja densiflora, blooms March to May

Owl's Clover grows in grassland. You can find it on Mount Burdell and Ring Mountain. It is a kind of Paintbrush.

This flower got its name from the shape of the individual flowers which, with a little imagination, look like little owls.

This species is variable in color. Those found at Rock Spring are particularly beautiful.

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Pacific Star Flower (Myrsine Family)

Trientalis latifolia, blooms April to May

Pacific Star Flower grows in shady woods. You can find it at Indian Tree Open Space, the Southern Marin Line Road, and Samuel P. Taylor State Park.

This flower has 6, and sometimes 7 petals. This is unusual for Primroses, which normally have 5.

The leaves radiate from a base below the flower, making a pretty background.

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Cobweb Thistle (Sunflower Family)

Cirsium occidentale, blooms May to June

Cobweb Thistle is grows in open rocky places. You can find one variety of it on the Trail to Abbott's Lagoon and a different variety on Mount Tamalpais.

Cobweb Thistle is named for the cobwebby haired bracts under the flower. Flowers can be pink, white or mauve.

Caterpillars of the Mylitta Crescent and Painted Ladies butterflies feed on this thistle.

Although there are several non-native thistles in Marin, Cobweb Thistle is a native.

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