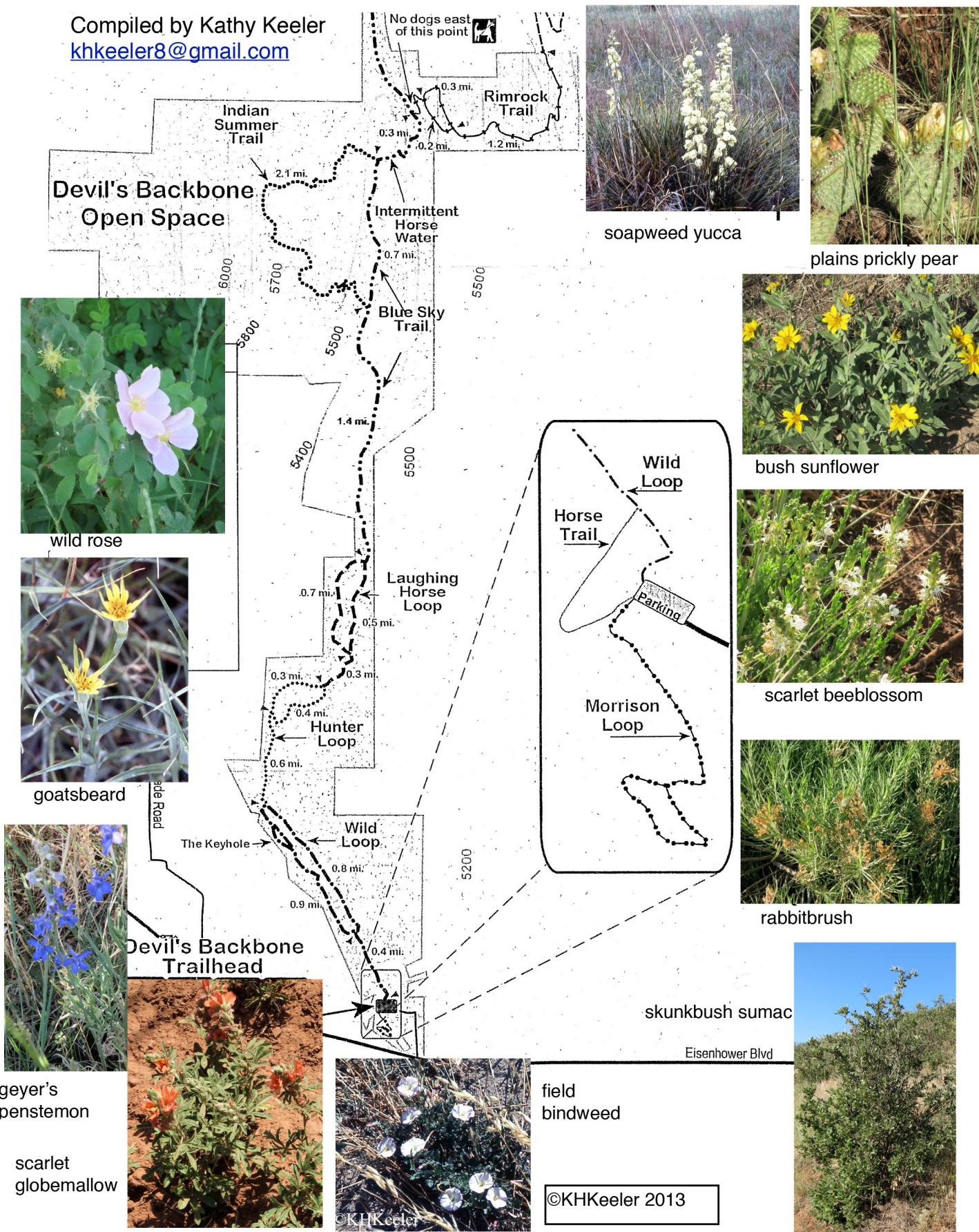


Eleven Common Trailside Plants of Devil's Backbone Open Space - June/July

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The seasons steadily change bringing different plants into flower. In late spring and early summer these are common and conspicuous:

bush sunflower- *Helianthus pumila*. Related to: sunflowers, daisies. Compared to cultivated sunflower, this plant is tiny, so it is also called the dwarf sunflower or little sunflower. Like all wild sunflowers, the seeds are tiny but edible. Native.

field bindweed - *Convolvulus arvensis*. Related to: morning glories. Flowers close in the afternoon. A vine, it tangles wheat and similar crops and so is a noxious weed in Colorado. From Eurasia.

geyer's larkspur, *Delphinium geyeri*. Related to: buttercups. Larkspurs are poisonous to livestock, so ranchers understandably do not like the brilliant blue flowers. Native.

goatsbeard - *Tragopogon dubius*. Related to: sunflowers. Flowers close in the afternoon. The seed pod looks like a tall dandelion seed pod. From Eurasia.

plains prickly pear - *Opuntia polyacantha*. Related to: cacti. The big spines are sharp but the tiny hairs are the real reason not to touch this plant. Native.

rubber rabbitbrush - *Ericameria nauseosa*. Related to: sunflowers. This common shrub has yellow flowers in late summer. It ranges into New Mexico and Arizona where it was used as traditional yellow dye by the Hopi and Navajo. Native.

scarlet beeblossom - *Gaura coccinea*. Related to: evening primroses. The name says scarlet but often these pretty little flowers are half red and half white. Native.

scarlet globemallow- *Sphaeralcea coccinea*. Related to: cotton. Widespread on the plains, it is also called cowboy's delight. Native.

skunkbush sumac - *Rhus trilobata*. Related to: cashews. This widespread western shrub has inconspicuous flowers in spring and red fruits in the fall. The distinctive, three-lobed leaves have an unpleasant smell when crushed, explaining the name. Native.

soapweed yucca - *Yucca glauca*. Related to: asparagus. Pioneers used the roots to wash their hair, which is why it is called soapweed. Native.

wild rose - *Rosa woodsii*. Related to: cultivated roses and to apples. Utes hollowed out the make pipstems and arrow shafts. Native.

writing about plants, travel and history: A Wandering Botanist. khkeeler.blogspot.com

For more information on these plants go to
<http://keeleranderson.net/DevilsBackbonePlants.html> (uppercase matters)

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