

Fawn Lilies, Harbingers of Spring

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Spring is here. The days are getting longer, and the weather is getting warmer. Trees are leafing out and flowers are starting to emerge. One of our first native flowers to bloom in Broadmead is the White Fawn Lily (*Erythronium oregonum*). They are a welcome harbinger of spring, and their cheerful blooms can be found carpeting the landscape.

Fawn lilies are native to Pacific North America and grow in meadows and woodlands from southwestern British Columbia down to northern California. They are perennial bulbs with dark green, oblong basal leaves which are mottled with brown and white patches. Flowers stalks typically have one bloom, but sometimes more. The petals are bent back, and the flower head is nodding and facing toward the ground.

In Broadmead, fawn lilies can be seen on the edges of properties where native turf has been maintained and in the shared parks and trails throughout the neighborhood. Unfortunately, we have been slowly losing our fawn lilies because of yard waste dumping, and thoughtless collection.

Fawn lilies are a spring plant and by mid-summer they are dormant. In the fall, what appear to be bare spots in the park are likely spring flower patches. When homeowners put yard waste into a park, fawn lilies as well as other native plants are smothered. Also,

such dumping introduces invasive species which further contribute to the degradation. To help preserve these important natural assets, no material of any kind should ever be put into the parks or common areas.

Enjoy the flowers! But please... never collect *Erythronium* seeds or plants from our shared green spaces. If you would like to introduce Fawn Lilies into your yard, plants and seeds are available at our local native plant provider -- Satin Flower Nursery.

Stay Green!

