

# ELEVATION outdoors

## Rocky Mtn. Wildflowers At Last an App I Can Use!

by Rob Coppelillo on June 12, 2012

It's not all [gear](#)-geeking and ski porn here on [Master of None](#), and to that end I want to hype a really well designed and fun app called "Rocky Mountain Wildflowers." The folks at High Country Apps are scientists first and designer/entrepreneurs second, but even so their app is the easiest I've used amongst the naturalist stuff out there—which is saying something, because I've blown cash on the Audubon bird guide and a few others. Rocky Mtn. Wildflowers is easier and more accurate for a bumbler like me, which is great!

For \$9.99 (Android and iPhone compatible), you can easily search flowers, even if you have no idea what you're doing (read: me). If you're pretty knowledgeable already, then you're gonna kill it with Rocky Mtn. Wildflowers—the pics and info live on your phone, so you're good to go even when you're way out in the wilderness.

I bring my phone along guiding these days, as it's my only GPS at present (don't get me started on the current crop of GPS handhelds—talk about poor user interfaces!), and I keep route info stored on it as well (via the [mountainproject.com](#) app). It was fun having access to wildflower info during my days—turns out what I've been calling "rock jasmine" down here is actually "alpine phlox." What I've been calling "blanketflower" is indeed blanketflower, but I think that's pretty much the extent of my "expertise." Oh well.



Blanketflower, one of the few wildflowers I can ID correctly!

The app has a great search function in which you describe the type of plant, the petal/fruit color, flower shape, fruit/seed shape, leaf shape, leaf arrangement, leaf/stem texture, plant size, habitat type, elevation, flowering time, and even its origin (if it's native or invasive). You may fill in as much or as little as you like, and even with my alpine ecology classes two decades old at this point I was able to identify a few flowers in just a few minutes. Totally cool.

I wish the Audubon society and a few other designers would take a page out of the High Country Apps playbook, because I find the interface simple and to the point. I haven't opened my Audubon bird guide in months, mostly because I end up looking at storks in the Everglades when I'm searching for birds of Rocky Mountain National Park. Oh well.

Great job to the gang up in Bozeman—I'll be looking for more apps from them in the future!