

Avalanche Lily

Erythronium montanum



Plant and Leaves:

- Among the first meadow plants to flower, and frequently through the snow. Plant is 6-16 inches tall (15-40 cm)
- Two sole basal leaves; 4-8 inches long and half as wide; leaves fleshy and true green

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Budding:

- A small white to pinkish bud emerges from a leafless stalk with two basal leaves



Flowering:

- 1 to 2, occasionally 3+ white flowers on 6-16 inch (15-40 cm) stem
- 6 petals sweep back to show the yellow center and the 6 long anthers with stamens
- Flowers frequently face down



Ripening Fruit:

- Three sided capsule at the end of a long stalk
- Capsule starts green and small (0.2 in or ~0.5 cm) and eventually develops into a larger red-brown capsule (up to 1.5 in or 4 cm)



Releasing Seed:

- The capsule opens at the top to release the small round seeds
- The stalk sounds like a rattle when the seeds are releasing because the capsules, seeds, and stems are so dry (this also acts as a catapult for long-distance dispersal)