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Subject: Colorado Wildflowers

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Tue, 14 Jul 2009 21:24:16 GMT

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Folks,

This article probably has nothing whatsoever to do with IDL, but let's see. Sometimes the oddest things do, and I've been thinking about this all day long.

The past two days have been glorious. Cobalt blue skies and mountain peaks with the last vestiges of snow appearing closer to you in the clear air than they do at just about any other time of the year. We live in Colorado just to enjoy days like this. And, God knows, we have more than our fair share of them.

But the past two days, as I've driven into the outskirts of Boulder, I have been overwhelmed with beautiful blue flowers in the fields and along the roads. Some kind of beautification campaign by the Chamber of Commerce? No, just a rainy year and acres and acres of chicory flowering.

You can see a picture here:

[http://www.easterncoloradowildflowers.com/\\_c\\_3frame.htm](http://www.easterncoloradowildflowers.com/_c_3frame.htm)

Search for "chicory" on the page.

Chicory blooms in the morning, and then the flowers are gone by about noon, with just a skeleton-looking plant remaining by the time you have retrieved your plant book and gone back to find out what this plant's name is. (I've been taking native plant classes this past year, with an eye on another career when IDL programming becomes completely point and click.)

Naturally, chicory is an invasive (and, in our state, noxious) weed and not the beautiful, uplifting plant I imagine it to be. We should be yanking these things out by their roots. But I'm not. I'm enjoying them. They make me feel good and hopeful and happy on the drive to work. I can't wait to see them again tomorrow.

OK, they are like IDL in this regard, I guess. I know there are better flowers out there: orchids and columbines and fairy slippers. But I like chicory. And I like IDL. Go figure. Life's a mystery.

Cheers,

David

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David Fanning, Ph.D.

Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming ([www.dfanning.com](http://www.dfanning.com))

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

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