

Flowering plant found at record 4,505m in Swiss alps

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An helicopter flies above a snowy peak near the village of Bourg-Saint-Pierre in the Swiss Alps in March 2010. A flowering plant has been found at an altitude of above 4,505 metres (14,780 feet) on the central Swiss alps -- a European record, Basel University said Tuesday.

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"It is almost a miracle, but at 4,505 metres, at 40 metres below the Dom peak in the canton of Valais, the ... *Saxifraga oppositifolia* has been recently discovered," said the university in a statement.

"It is the highest elevation flowering plant that has ever been documented in Europe, and the location is probably the coldest point in

the world where a flowering plant has been found," it added.

The plant, also known as the purple mountain saxifrage, is common in mountainous areas.

But it was found for the first time at such [high altitude](#) between solid rock by botanist Christian Koerner.

Scientists said that at such an altitude, the plant regularly has to endure night-time temperatures of below zero degrees Celsius (32 degrees Fahrenheit) and [winter temperatures](#) that plunge as low as -20.9 degrees Celsius.

In [summer temperatures](#) reach a maximum of 18.1 degrees Celsius.

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