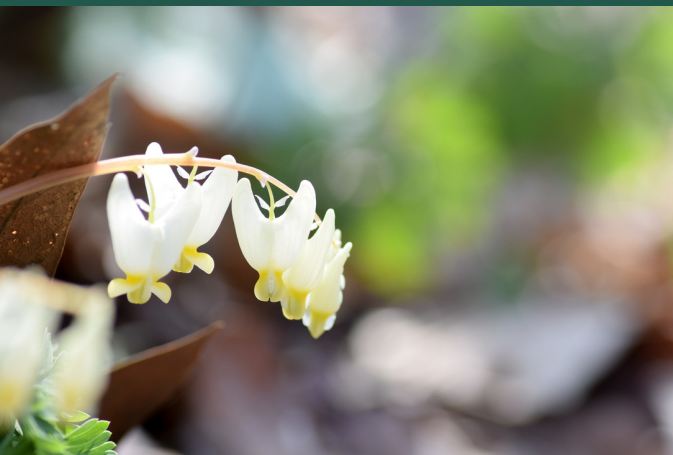


3 NATIVE WILDFLOWERS

TO LOOK FOR THIS SPRING



DUTCHMAN'S BREECHES

Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) is a widespread native wildflower, found throughout most of the eastern U.S. and parts of the west as well. This is one of Pennsylvania's early bloomers, with their unique looking flowers appearing in March and early April. Their flowers are white, and have a resemblance to baggy pants, hence the "breeches" component of their common name. The nectar within each flower is highly attractive to bees, and bumble bees specifically. Each flower, upon being pollinated, turns into a tiny fruit whose seeds are beloved by ants. The ants don't consume the seeds, but rather eat a nutritious outer component, called the elaiosome. Ants then discard the seeds, which eventually sprout and grow into new plants. You can find this species growing within rich woodlands on shady, rocky slopes.

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BLOODROOT

Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) is a relatively common perennial wildflower found in eastern North America. They get their name from the red liquid found within their rhizomes. Despite having showy white flowers, Bloodroots offer no nectar (much to the dismay of many insects). They do offer pollen though, which is attractive to some insects such as mining bees. An interesting behavior exhibited by this species is that their flower petals close overnight, and reopen during the day. Similar to Dutchman's Breeches, Bloodroot is dispersed by ants, who are attracted to the fleshy elaiosomes found on their seeds. The leaves of Bloodroot are very distinctive, in that each plant has a single, irregularly shaped basal leaf with 5-7 lobes. You can find this species growing within undisturbed woodlands, often along slopes bordering streams and other moist environments.

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WILD COLUMBINE

Wild Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) is a rather attractive, perennial wildflower, bearing showy red to pinkish flowers that readily stand out in the spring. Their flowers aren't just attractive to us, as their nectar is among the most important food sources for Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Bumblebees and some moths are attracted to their flowers as well. Wild Columbine is one of the larger wildflower species, with individuals capable of growing a few feet tall. Unlike the aforementioned species, Wild Columbine tends to bloom later in spring and into early summer. You can find this species growing on rocky wooded slopes throughout a large stretch of the eastern United States and portions of Canada as well.

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