

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## BLOODROOT

BLOODROOT, '*SANGUINARIA CANADENSIS*'

SPRING [1]



## NOTES [A,B,C,L]

Bloodroot is an early spring ephemeral that emerges from the ground in woodlands before the trees leaf out. Unique, cigar-shaped leaves slowly unfurl and open up into large, water-lily-like foliage with pristine white flowers bearing golden-yellow centers. A crimson sap (hence the name) flows through its roots and stems when broken and is toxic to herbivores. It performs best when planted in a shady, moist, well-drained site, typical of a rich, humus woodland environment such as around mature oak trees.

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## COMMON BLUE VIOLET

COMMON BLUE VIOLET, 'VIOLA SORORIA'

SPRING [2]



## NOTES [A,D,E,I]

Common Blue Violet, the state flower of Illinois, has a freely self-seeding nature and will spread readily as a ground cover that may grow up to eight inches high, often forming dense beds. As the common name suggests, the petals are usually blue or blue-violet with white throats, but they may also be white, or a mix of blue and white. They thrive in a variety of habitats, including forests and woodlands ranging from mesic to fairly dry.



# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## DUTCHMAN'S BREECHES

DUTCHMAN'S BREECHES, '*DICENTRA CUCULLARIA*'

SPRING [3]



## NOTES [A,C,F]

Dutchman's Breeches, sometimes referred to as a miniature, wild version of Bleeding Heart. They have creamy white flowers so named for their resemblance to upside-down, hung-to-dry on a clothes line pairs of trousers or pants. It is an early spring woodland ephemeral that flowers promptly in the spring when sunlight hits the woodland floor and before the overhead canopy fill in with juvenile leaves. It has feathery, fern-like leaves reminiscent of flat-leaved parsley and can be found on mature hardwood forest floors where the soil is moist and fertile.

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT

JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT, 'ARISAEMA TRIPHYLLUM'

SPRING [4]



## NOTES [A,G,H]

Jack in the Pulpit prefers a rich soil in the shade such as found in a mature hardwood forest with a thick layer of leaf cover over the winter. The fascinating bloom consists of a green and red-brown striped hood that conceals a spadix (flower spike) or "Jack". This unusual flower gives-way to a cluster of bright red berries in late summer, which may be eaten by birds and mammals. A recommended early fall planting allows the roots time to properly establish before the onset of winter, thereby giving the plants a stronger beginning the following spring.

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## JACOB'S LADDER

JACOB'S LADDER, '*POLEMONIUM REPTANS*'

SPRING [5]



## NOTES [A,H,I,J]

Jacob's Ladder is a native woodland plant, with delicate compound leaves that support a proliferation of small, lavender-blue blooms for several weeks in early spring. Unlike most other ephemeral spring blooms, the foliage of Jacob's Ladder stays lush and green all summer. These pinnately compound leaves with oval leaflets are arranged like the rungs of a ladder (hence the common name). Prefers to be mulched with leaves and is commonly found in partially shaded naturalized areas, woodland gardens, or native plant gardens.



# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## MAYAPPLE

MAYAPPLE, '*PODOPHYLLUM PELTATUM*'

SPRING [6]



## NOTES [A,H,I,K]

Mayapple has interesting “umbrella-like” foliage and is sometimes referred to as the Umbrella Plant because of its large, palm-shaped leaves. These leaves unfurl in early spring and shelter a single, fragrant white flower along its stem. After blooming, the flower produces a yellow “apple-like” fruit. Like many other spring ephemerals, this woodland species also appreciates a generous blanket of leaves in the fall. Mayapple occurs often in high quality old-growth mesic deciduous woodlands that have some prior history of disturbance.

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## SHOOTING STAR

SHOOTING STAR, 'DODECATHEON MEADIA'

SPRING [7]



## NOTES [A,I,LM]

Shooting Star is a native spring perennial plant known for its clumping habit, emerging from a basal rosette of leaf foliage. Flower color varies from shades of white, pink, lavender, purple, or rose-colored petals depending on the population and location. It prefers partial shade but can tolerate full sun in cooler climates if the soil remains evenly moist such as in dappled sunlight that mimics its natural woodland habitat. Common companion plants include other shade-loving woodland perennials such as ferns, trillium, and wild violets.

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## SMOOTH YELLOW VIOLET

SMOOTH YELLOW VIOLET, '*VIOLA ERIOCARPA*'

SPRING [8]



## NOTES [A,D,I]

Smooth Yellow Violet blooms in early spring with tiny yellow flowers that have purple veining on the lower petals near the base. The leaves are heart-shaped at the end of long stems that can grow up to a foot tall. Habitats include moist to mesic deciduous woodlands, woodland borders, and thickets. It grows best in partial shade and prefers loamy soil that is well-draining. However, it can tolerate a range of soil types but flourishes in soil that retains some moisture without becoming too waterlogged.



# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## SPRING BEAUTY

SPRING BEAUTY, 'CLAYTONIA VIRGINICA'

SPRING [9]



## NOTES [A,I,K]

Spring Beauty is a native spring perennial in the purslane family found in moist woodland areas. It is a low growing groundcover that colonizes into huge patches from underground tubers that have small, potato-like corms. It's flowers are clustered into a loose bunch of light pink or white flowers that exhibit dark pink stripes. This hardy perennial can tolerate growing in most varieties of soil and it is recommended to be planted in partly shady places.

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## PRAIRIE TRILLIUM

PRAIRIE TRILLIUM, '*TRILLIUM RECURVATUM*'

SPRING [10]



## NOTES [A,H,I]

Prairie Trillium is a perfect choice for moist clay soil, and does best in a lightly shaded and slightly damp setting. One of the earliest blooming trilliums, featuring unique wine-red flowers atop strikingly large, mottled leaves similar in appearance to the Trout Lily. It blooms at approximately the same time as Virginia Bluebells in the same rich understory environment of a forest or shaded naturalized area.

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## VIRGINIA BLUEBELLS

VIRGINIA BLUEBELLS, '*MERTENSIA VIRGINICA*'

SPRING [11]



## NOTES [A,L,N]

Virginia Bluebells or simply “Bluebells” are one of the earliest native spring ephemerals with “bell” shaped blooms lasting for several weeks. The flower buds start-off as pink and gradually develop into a shade of light lavender-blue as they come into full bloom. Bluebells are a colonizing, herbaceous perennial that prefers a habit around a pond or stream margin and/or part-shade to shaded woodland environment. Plants primarily spread through self-seeding and also by a network of underground rhizomes which allows them to slowly expand their colonies over time.



# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## WHITE TROUT LILY

WHITE TROUT LILY, '*ERYTHRONIUM ALBIDUM*'

SPRING [12]



## NOTES [A,D,I,O,P,Q]

White Trout Lily, Trout Lily or sometimes referred to as White Dog Tooth Violet, has thick tulip-like green leaves with a distinctive silvery-grey and maroon mottled leaf pattern. These distinctive speckled leaf patterns give rise to the common name of Trout Lily. Under the right conditions, these plants will eventually spread to form colonies, but will not flower for 4-5 years once propagated by seed. Typically found naturalized in moist soils of shaded areas in native plant gardens, shade gardens, woodland gardens, or wild/ naturalized areas.

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## WILD COLUMBINE

WILD COLUMBINE, '*AQUILEGIA CANADENSIS*'

SPRING [13]



## NOTES [A,D,I,L]

Wild Columbine is the only columbine native to Illinois and its blooms are always some shade of red. Also called American Columbine, it is among the first plants to provide important nectar in the early spring for bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Wild Columbine will tolerate a large range of soil types and sunlight conditions ranging from dappled-sunlight to full sun as well as a shaded environment.

# WOODLAND SPRING EPHEMERALS

## WILD GERANIUM

WILD GERANIUM, '*GERANIUM MACULATUM*'

SPRING [14]



## NOTES [A,D,I,L]

Wild Geranium also called Cranesbill, is a typical native species of mesic deciduous woodlands but is also found in both floodplain and upland woodlands, meadows in wooded areas and semi-shaded seeps. It is considered one of the easier understory woodland species to cultivate. It prefers shade or partial shade where deeply lobed palmate leaves stay attractive all season-long.



# WOODLAND SCREENING SHRUBS AND TREES

## SOURCES

### Photo Credit

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