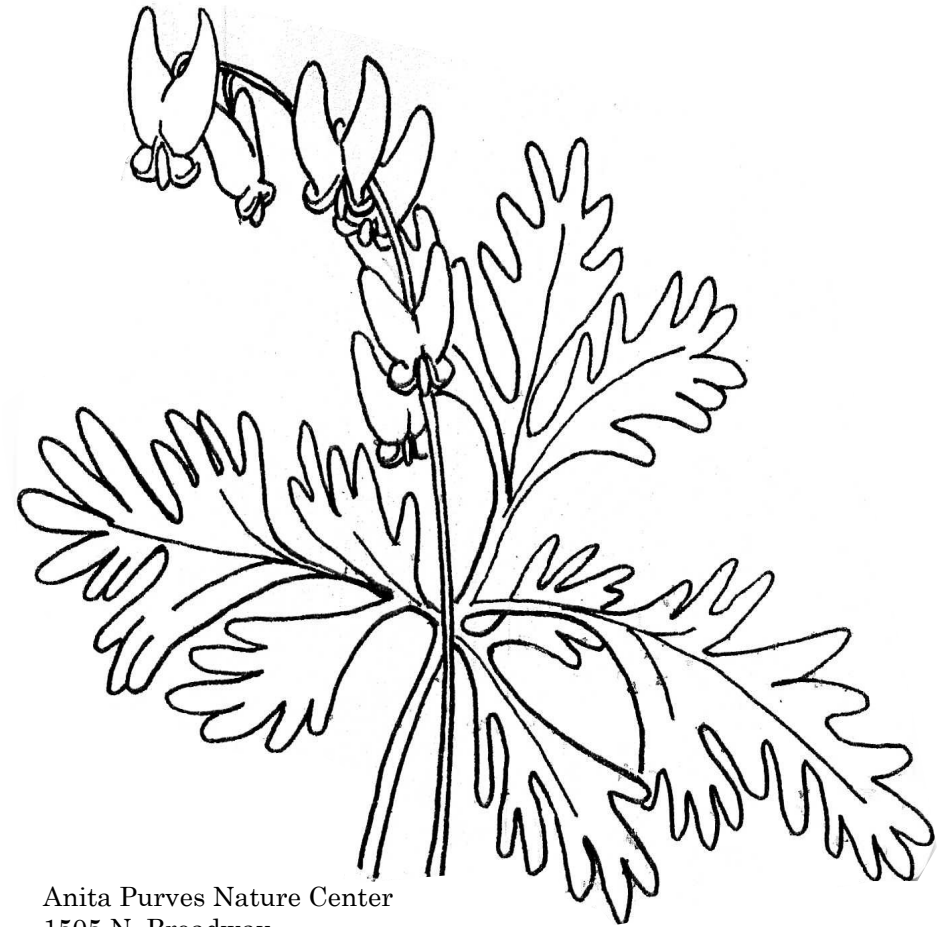




Busey Woods  
Hansen Wildflower Trail



Anita Purves Nature Center  
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Urbana, IL 61801  
217-384-4062  
[www.urbanaparks.org](http://www.urbanaparks.org)

Spring is a busy time in Busey Woods. The melting snow and longer days are signals for the woodland plants to bloom. As insects emerge and migrating birds return to Busey Woods, many people visit the woods to observe these harbingers of spring. During your hike, observe the patterns, colors and scents of the flowers. These are utilized by the plants to attract pollinators such as bees, flies and butterflies.

During the 1960's and 1970's Busey Woods' historical and natural heritage was threatened by plans of industrial development. Concerned citizens formed the *Friends of Busey Woods*, a group which sought to protect Busey Woods from destruction. In 1973, their hopes were realized when Busey Woods was leased to the Urbana Park District by the University of Illinois as a nature preserve to be used for environmental education. The Park District purchased the woods in 1991 through an Illinois Department of Natural Resources Land and Water Conservation Fund grant.

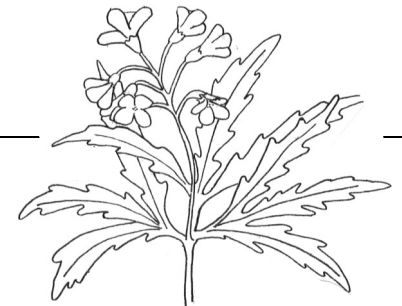
The *Friends of Busey Woods* donated their funds in memory of past president, Don Hansen. Their donation aided in the construction of a wildflower trail in Busey Woods.



Most of the flowers described in this booklet can be found throughout Busey Woods. The area designated as the Wildflower Trail exhibits the widest diversity of flower species. Enjoy your hike through Busey Woods this spring and discover the natural beauty Don Hansen and other *Friends of Busey Woods* helped to preserve.

While hiking, please respect the following rules:

1. Stay on the trails
2. Look, but do not pick or collect anything.
3. No pets.
4. No bikes or vehicles.

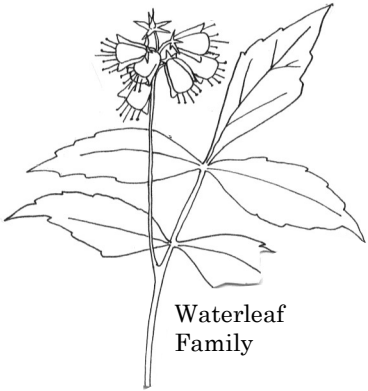


#### *A WORD OF CAUTION*

Though some descriptions in this guide mention edible parts or medicinal uses of plants, they are only folklore, added for the historical aspects of the plant descriptions. Please do not pick any plants.

**Virginia Waterleaf**  
*Hydrophyllum virginianum*  
 Blooms mid-May to mid-June

At first glance, the five large stamens at the center of this pale violet flower would appear to block an insect's access to the nectar. But in reality, they are an evolutionary adaptation, preventing smaller insects from reaching the nectar. The pollen can only be transported by large insects, since only they are strong enough to push the stems aside, to get to the nectar and pollinate the flower.

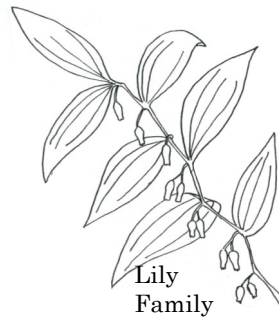


Waterleaf Family

Notice the whitish spots on the leaf. The scientific name, *Hydrophyllum*, means water leaf. It describes the mottled appearance of the leaves that look as if they had water on them.

**Solomon's Seal**  
*Polygonatum canaliculatum*  
 Blooms May until mid-June

Look for the flowers of this tall, arching plant. They are green and hang down from the leaf axis. When the plant dies back in late fall, a scar is left on the root. The age of the plant can be determined by counting these root scars. The shape of these root scars are the basis for this plant's common name. King Solomon's ring signet was the star of David. The root scars on Solomon's Seal resemble this signet. Count the points from the petals of the floral tube. These six points also resemble King Solomon's Seal.



Lily Family

The plant had many medical uses. A bath made from the plant was said to soothe external wounds and infections, including poison ivy. The Chippewa Indians inhaled smoke from crushed roots on hot stones as a cure for headaches.

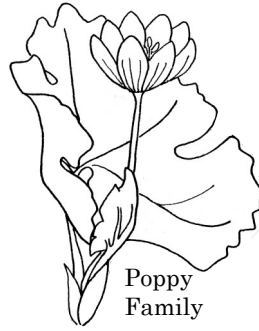


## Bloodroot

*Sanquinaria canadensis*

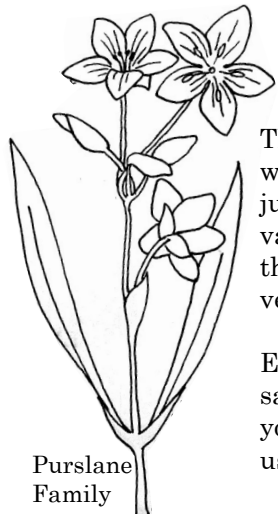
Blooms late March to early April

This rare, many-petaled white flower protects itself from the frosty weather. If it is chilly today, you may note how the leaves curl around the stem to protect the flower from the cold. As the weather warms, the leaves will unfold.



If Bloodroot is not pollinated by insects within hours of blooming, the stamens wither and collapse around the stigma, thereby self-pollinating and ensuring a source of seed. The seeds have a gelatinous coat which attracts ants, who unknowingly spread the seeds.

The name, bloodroot, comes from the red sap of the root. The root is poisonous and was used as a laxative and an anticoagulant by Native Americans. Root juice and sugar were rolled into cough drops as a cure for sore throats.



## Spring Beauty

*Claytonia virginica*

Blooms late March to May

The Spring Beauty flower consists of five, whitish to light-pink petals which bloom for just three days. The flower is visited by a large variety of insect species which are attracted to the petal's ultraviolet pink veins. Locate these veins and follow them to the flower's center.

Early settlers discovered that when boiled and salted the roots tasted like chestnuts. The young leaves, rich in vitamins A and C, were used in salads.



## Toothwort

*Dentaria laciniata*

Blooms late March to May

The common name for this white flower comes from its tooth-shaped root. The scientific name refers to the roots (Dens) and the slashed appearance of the leaves (laciniata). The Toothwort is also called pepper root because the root tastes like radishes or pepper.

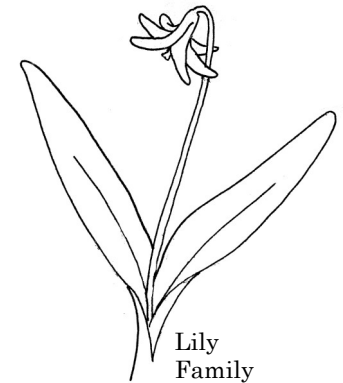
Look for a spot located at the base of each petal. This spot reflects ultraviolet light which helps attract pollinating insects and guides them to the flower's supply of nectar. In return, the insects pollinate the flower.

## Trout Lily

*Erythronium albidum*

Blooms late March to May

The leaves of this white lily are narrow and taper at each end, mottled, and resemble the scales of a trout. Another common name for this plant is white dog-toothed violet. The plant is not really a violet, but has a dog-tooth shaped bulb which reminded early settlers and botanists of a violet's bulb.



The trout lily has a peculiar growth strategy. Are there a lot of trout lilies blooming in this area? The plant does not flower every year. After germinating, the plant uses all of its energy to develop larger and deeper bulbs for the first five growing seasons. It does not flower during these five years. On the sixth year, a flower appears in early spring.

## Virginia Bluebells

*Mertensia virginica*

Blooms April to late May

The bluebells rise taller than the surrounding spring woodland vegetation. Their deep green leaves are prominent among the other lighter spring vegetation. The flowers are bell-shaped and blossom first a deep pink and then turn brilliant blue.

As the month of June draws to a close so does the seasonal life of the bluebells. Their leaves turn yellow and are gone before summer gets into full swing.



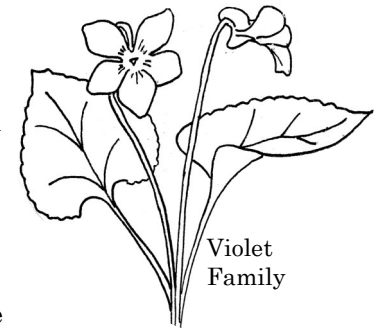
Borage  
Family

## Blue Violet

*Viola sororia*

Blooms mid-April to June

This common woodland flower is the Illinois State Flower and has an interesting legend regarding its origin. Legend states that the Greek god, Zeus, turned his lover, Io, into a cow to hide her from his wife, Hera. Io, the cow, now forced to eat grass, cried and cried because the grass hurt her throat. Zeus felt sorry for her and turned her tears into violets (the Io in violets means violet in Greek) which are a more delicate food.



Violet  
Family

Violets were eaten as greens and used as painkillers by Native Americans. A tea from the roots and flowers was used as a cure for coughs, insomnia, nervous problems and headaches.

## Wild Geranium

*Geranium maculatum*

Blooms late April to late May

*Geranium* is Greek for crane. As the ovary of this plant matures, the style persists and resembles a bird's bill; thus its common name, cranesbill. The persistent style eventually splits with enough force to send seeds up to 30 feet away.

The geranium has medicinal properties, utilized by Chippewa Native Americans and early settlers. The root contains tannin and was employed as an intestinal astringent and as a cure for dysentery. When boiled, the root was used to cure sore throats. After grinding to a powder, it was used to stop bleeding.



Geranium  
Family

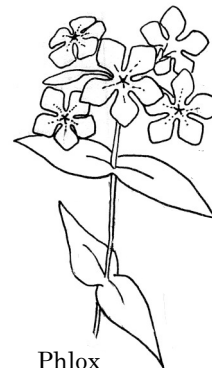
## Blue Phlox

*Phlox divaricata*

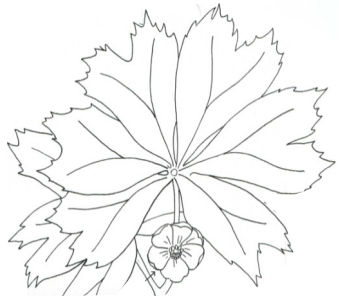
Blooms in mid-April to early June

The common woodland phlox in Illinois is the blue phlox. Phlox is Greek for flame and refers to the brilliant colors and shape of the flowers.

Observe carefully which insects visit the phlox flowers. You should see many more butterflies than other insects. They are an excellent addition to a butterfly garden.



Phlox  
Family



Barberry  
Family

## May Apple

*Podophyllum peltatum*

Blooms April to early May

The May Apple is colonial and may cover broad areas of the forest floor. Look for the creamy white flower under the leaves. It blooms only on plants with two leaves. One-leafed plants are sterile and do not flower. The apple-like fruit which ripens in May gives this flower its common name.

Two drugs are derived from the root of the May Apple which is poisonous. Podophyllum is a strong laxative. Peltatine is used in cancer experiments and prevents cells from dividing.

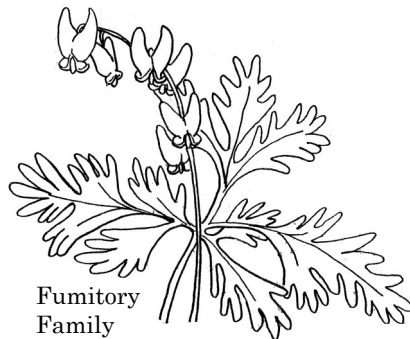
## Dutchman's Breeches

*Dicentra cucullaria*

Blooms late March to early April

Note the unusual flower shape of this plant. Breeches (leg coverings) refer to the two upper petals. The scientific genus name, *Dicentra*, meaning two spurs or two hoods, also refers to the two upper petals.

Bumble bees are strong enough to push the flowers open to reach the nectar. However, honey bees do not get any nectar for their troubles, only pollen. The plant is poisonous if eaten.



Fumitory  
Family

## Swamp Buttercup

*Ranunculus septentrionalis*

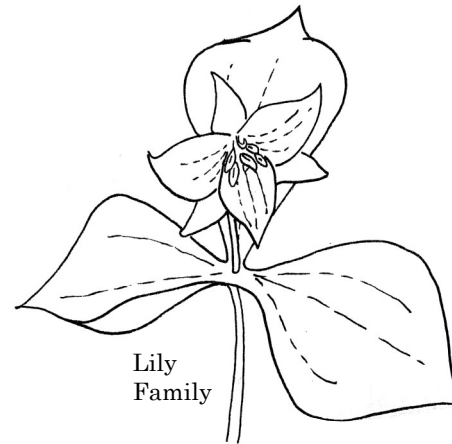
Blooms late March to late May

These five-petaled plants are common in wet woods. *Ranunculus* means little frog in Latin and refers to the frog shaped seeds this plant produces.

Many settlers called the buttercup "crazy weed". They thought if you held the flower next to your neck when the moon is full, it would cause insanity. This probably came about because many species of *Ranunculus* are poisonous, irritate the skin and cause blisters. If cattle eat buttercups, they will produce bitter milk.



Buttercup



Lily  
Family

## Purple Wake Robin

*Trillium recurvatum*

Blooms early April to late May

This maroon-flowered trillium occurs mostly in oak woods.

The name, Wake Robin comes from its close relation to the Snow Trillium. These Trilliums bloom even before the robins return from the south.

Note that all the plant's parts occur in multiples of 3, thus the TRI in its name. The species name, *recurvatum*, refers to the backward curve of the sepals at the base of the flower.