

April - Week 5 *Woodland Wildflowers coming into Bloom*

The Deciduous Forest floor typically becomes dotted with blooming wildflowers in late April. For several weeks the forest's open canopy has allowed sunlight to warm the ground and stimulate the growth and development of spring wildflowers such as bloodroot, wild ginger, and Dutchman's breeches. Many of these flowers bloom for only a couple of short weeks before the leafy canopy closes up and shades the ground for the remainder of the growing season.

Walk along a forest path or a woodland edge and look for blooming spring wildflowers. The flowers come in a variety of shapes, but many of them have white petals. When you find wildflowers in bloom, take note of their design. How many petals do they have? What color are they? Are insects visiting them? Lean or kneel down. Do you notice any scents? What do their leaves look like? Are the plants tall or short? Are they growing in clumps or are they spread out?

Collect your observations as labeled drawings or lists of descriptive words. Do you know the species you are observing? If so, name it. If not, use your observations to further investigate and identify the species. Then revisit the wildflowers to confirm your analysis and observe that flower and any others that may have come into bloom since your previous visit. Are more or less flowers in bloom now? If you are unable to visit woodlands, walk through a park or grassy area and document the April bloomers in those areas and use the same questions as you observe and journal about the spring wildflowers in bloom.



Trillium are a very common early-season wildflower.