

What's In Bloom?

AT ADKINS ARBORETUM IN APRIL



Packera aurea (PAK-er-uh AW-re-uh) golden ragwort—Golden yellow flowers with yellow rays and broad, button-shaped disks are arranged in spreading clusters of flat-topped flower heads. The lowest (basal) leaves of golden ragwort are heart-shaped. It is a member of the Aster family (Asteraceae). Look for this plant along the Blockston Branch path by the creek.



Erythronium americanum (air-ith-ROHN-ee-um am-er-ih-CAN-um) trout lily, yellow adder's tongue—This delightful low plant grows in moist woodlands. The pair of mottled leaves has a yellow, six parted flower on a nodding stalk between them. Trout lilies are 5 to 10 inches, tall in the lily family. Found in the floodplain at the southern end of the Tuckahoe Valley trail.



Mertensia virginica (mer-TEN-see-ah ver-JIN-ih-kah) Virginia bluebells— Among the first plants to bloom in spring, the pink buds open to blue, trumpet-shaped flowers. These bluebells were planted at the Arboretum. If undisturbed, this species will form large colonies. They are found along Blockston Branch path.



Podophyllum peltatum (poh-doh-FY-lum pel-TAY-tum) mayapple—The large green leaves create an “umbrella” over the small white flower. In early summer, the fruit becomes the prominent feature while leaves yellow and wilt. Plants with only one leaf will not flower, only plants with two leaves flower. It is found throughout the Arboretum woods.



Uvularia sessilifolia (yew-vew-LAR-ee-ah ses-sih- lih-FOH-lee-ah) bellwort—The delicate, arching, usually solitary stems support narrow, bell-shaped single flowers. In groups, it gives a feeling of movement when all the stems arch in the same direction. It belongs to the lily family, and is common along Blockston Branch. Bumblebees pollinate all species of the bellworts.



Claytonia virginica (clay-TOH-nee-ah vir-GIN-i-kah) spring beauty—This low-growing spring bloomer boasts beautiful pink and white striped blossoms. The flower has reflective lines designed to catch the “eye” of early pollinators and serve as guides to bees. The seed pods are capable of ejecting seeds up to two feet in any direction. It prefers moist sites along streams.

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Sanguinaria canadensis (san-gwin-AHR-ee-ah kan-ah-DEN-sis) bloodroot—The large white flowers last only a few days. The stem and roots contain a deep red juice from which it gets its common name. It is in the poppy family (Papaveraceae), but is the only member of its genus in the world. It can bloom early because it over-winters resources in its thick roots. Look for these along Tuckahoe Creekside path.



Asimina triloba (ass-uh-MEE-nah try-LO-bah) pawpaw—in the spring a beautiful deep maroon flower appears suspended from the branches. The color attracts fly and beetle pollinators. Flowers can't self pollinate because the stigma matures before the anthers. Paw paws are found throughout the Arboretum woods.



Amelanchier canadensis (am-el-AN-keer kan-ah-DEN-sis) shadbush—Shadbush is the first understory tree to bloom in spring (when the shad are running in nearby rivers in March and April). Starry white flowers, smooth bark, and graceful form make this a delightful tree. The berries are black, juicy, and sweet. It can be found along the upland path.



Fagus grandifolia (FAY-gus gran-dih-FOH-lee-uh) American beech—Usually known for its smooth bark, the wind-pollinated spring flowers are fuzzy and bright green. The flowers lead to seeds (beech nuts) which are triangular in shape and are eaten by humans and a variety of other wildlife. This species can reach ages of 300 – 400 years old. There are many large trees along the Tuckahoe Valley Trail.



Sassafras albidum (SAS-uh-fras al-BE-dum) sassafras tree—The greenish-yellow flowers appear in spring before the leaves. Trees can have either male or female flowers. Flowers on female trees become a small cluster of bluish-black berries. Look for sassafras at the meadow's edge.



Cornus florida (KOR-nus FLOR-ih-da) dogwood—The showy white “petals” are actually bracts, 2-4" wide. The true flowers are greenish-white and clustered in the center of the four bracts, which are notched at the tip. Dogwood grows as a small tree, flowering best at the edge of the woods. Dogwoods grow along the Upland Path.