

Spring Beauty



One of the first spring wildflowers to adorn the woodlands is spring beauty. Often coming up in March and April, unseasonably cold conditions this spring has delayed their blossoms. These individual dainty

white or pale pink flowers may be overlooked but they often make up for their small size with sheer numbers. Spring-beauties tend to colonize and carpet large areas of the forest floor.

More than just a pretty flower, spring beauty is a fierce survivalist that is able to cope with the harshness of early spring conditions.

To conserve heat and prevent rainwater from diluting its sweet nectar, the flowers close when the sun is low or rain threatens. Spring beauty's leaves are unlike other forest floor plants which usually have broad leaves to gather as much sunlight under the shaded canopy. Thin, grass-like leaves enable this early bloomer to easily position its leaves toward the sun to capture the low angle sunlight in spring.

Look for spring beauty and other wildflowers along CNC's Sugar Bush and Meadow Mouse Trails.

Bee Guides

What insects pollinate these early flowers? The white glistening petals act as reflective beacons to attract the earliest bees and flies. The pink coloring is especially attractive to bumblebees, but the white blossoms seem to attract the smaller bees and flies. Pink lines on the flower petals act as "bee guides" towards the nectar and pollen.

Crawling insects like ants might try to steal the sweet nectar, but thin leaves and stems protect the flower from such thieves.

