

Spring Ephemerals in Minnesota Woodlands



Sharp Lobed Hepatica
(*Hepatica acutiloba*)



Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)



Yellow Trout Lily
(*Erythronium americanum*)



Wood Anemone
(*Anemone quinquefolia*)



Spring Beauty
(*Claytonia virginica*)



Dutchman's Breeches
(*Dicentra cucullaria*)



Cut-Leaved Toothwort
(*Cardamine concatenata*)



Snow Trillium
(*Trillium nivale*)

Spring ephemerals are a subcategory of wildflowers primarily found on the forest floor. They go through their entire life cycle before the forest leaves have fully emerged and close their canopy in early summer. That means they develop above ground parts in March and April, flower, and go to seed all before they die back to their underground parts by May or June. In doing so, spring ephemerals take advantage of sunlight that penetrates the bare branches of the deciduous woodlands. Sharp lobed hepatica capitalizes on this as well, though contrary to other ephemerals, their leaves persist through the summer and following winter.

Early Spring Blooms in Minnesota Prairies



Blue-eyed Grass
(*Sisyrinchium campestre*)



Prairie Alumroot
(*Heuchera richardsonii*)



Prairie Smoke
(*Geum triflorum*)

Prairie spring flowers are some of the first to bloom after winter's thaw and provide a welcoming delight to the warming months ahead. They provide an important source of pollen and nectar to a host of invertebrates including many bees and butterflies. The birdfoot violet is a host plant to many fritillary butterfly species, while prairie smoke is especially valuable to bumble bee queens that have overwintered and are in need of resources in the spring.



Birdfoot Violet
(*viola pedata*)



American Pasqueflower
(*Anemone patens*)



Prairie Shooting Star
(*Dodecatheon meadia*)



Hoary Puccoon
(*Lithospermum canescens*)

Threats to our native ephemerals!

Invasive species such as siberian squill, garlic mustard and goutweed threaten native woodland spring flowers! Do you part to identify and eradicate these species in natural areas where you can!



Siberian squill
(*Scilla siberica*)

-Non-native spring ephemeral brought over from Europe as an ornamental.

-Escaped and naturalized in many woodlands and spread quickly by seed and bulb offshoots.

-Noticeably chokes out native spring ephemerals.



Garlic mustard
(*Alliaria petiolata*)

-A restricted noxious weed list (cannot be transported, introduced, or sold in Minnesota).

-Forms a rosette in the first year and grows up to four feet high in its second and flowering year.

-Large patches can occur quickly due to its prolific seed production.



Goutweed
(*Aegopodium podagraria*)

-Aggressive non-native from Europe brought over as an ornamental ground cover.

-Thrives in a variety of conditions and grows quickly through perennial rhizomes.

-It's invasive nature outcompetes our native species including spring ephemerals.

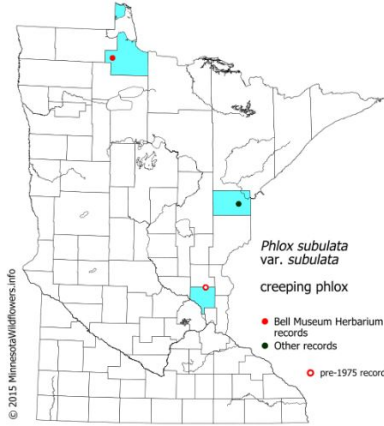
Manually digging out or pulling out plants can be effective in small populations. Mowing when plants are in flower or the use of herbicide are also methods that may be used to reduce populations.

The Full Moon is the Pink Moon!

The April Moon will appear full for 3 nights from Tuesday evening to Friday morning.



Moss pink, Creeping phlox
(*Phlox subulata*)



Distribution in MN

The full pink moon celebrates early spring ephemerals!

April is the Pink Moon, named after the herb moss pink, also known as creeping phlox (*Phlox subulata*).

Native to the eastern US, it prefers rocky slopes or sandy soil, and is one of the earliest spring flowers out east.

Creeping phlox is often used as ground cover, for rock gardens and border plantings. In Minnesota native landscapes however, it can be considered a non-native weed.



Prairie Phlox
(*Phlox pilosa*)



Wild Blue phlox
(*Phlox divaricata*)



Spring Beauty
(*Claytonia virginica*)

Here are a few native spring flowering alternatives we can plant and look for in the landscape to celebrate in Minnesota!

