



Woodland Phlox or "Sweet William": The bluish-lavender flowers are clustered. The leaves and stems are covered with down.

Mayapple: An umbrella-like leaf protects the single, waxy white flower emerging on the leaf fork. They are often in colonies almost anywhere in the woods. The "apple" is a large, yellow berry.



False Solomon Seal: Found along woodland slopes and moist bluffs, it has a cluster of small white flowers each with six spreading oblong segments. These become a mass of red berries in the fall.



Solomon Seal: The drooping flowers are underneath the stem. These inconspicuous greenish flowers hang in pairs.



Columbine: Brightly colored, scarlet blossoms, found on rocky slopes and shaded edges of woods. Petals form five tubes ending in red spurs with nectar within.



Wild Geranium: Frail looking, but sturdy plants with pale purple inflorescence appearing later in May. With deeply lobed leaves and hairy stems, it appears in rich woods and meadows.



Bellwort: Found in rich woods and thickets, it has oval-pointed leaves and drooping bell-shaped yellow flowers.



IOWA Woodland Wildflowers



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*photos for this brochure taken
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Virginia Bluebells

Checklist of Common IOWA WOODLAND FLOWERS

When spring comes to the woodland, it not only means a new outlook weather-wise, but a new season of outdoor fun—the flower finding season. The pleasure of finding woodland flowers lasts spring, summer, and fall as new varieties unfold. All you need for this intriguing pleasure is a flower guide and possibly a camera. Please only take photos. Not only are plants protected on public lands, most have very specific habitat requirements and will not survive transplanting. As a suggestion, take this brochure with you and check off the woodland flowers as you find them. The flowers featured here are all found in April and May.

Early Spring—April

Trillium: With three petals, three sepals and three leaves, these white flowers are found on southern exposures of woodland hillsides where the snow melts first. These early spring flowers peer above the ground as soon as the snow melts in March.



Hepatica or “Liverwort”: Light blue or pink-white flowers with liver-shaped, three-lobed leaves bearing hairy stems. Often found in brown leaves and debris of the woodland floor.



Bloodroot: Reddish-orange juice in the stems and roots that “bleed” when broken. The base leaves are wrapped around the flower and spear through the woodland floor before unwrapping the white, single flower.



Dutchman’s Breeches: Fragrant, drooping flowers on a tuft of fern-like foliage. Flowers resemble “breeches” on a slender clothesline with a nectar pocket in each leg.



Rue Anemone or “Wind Flower”: A delicate, slender buttercup with white to pale pink flower clusters appearing at the end of April and early May. Leaves are divided into rounded, three-lobed leaflets.



Early May

Dog-tooth Violet: A member of the lily family with little or no stem. Found in moist woods and meadows, creek bottoms and along rivers. The narrow, pointed leaves, mottled with brown, seem to spring from the earth. White, single blooming flower. Each plant has one leaf until the second year it blooms, then it sends up two.



Virginia Bluebells: Blue petals are on a stout stem. Flowers are drooping and trumpet-like. *(pictured on cover)*

Common Violet: Found in cool, shaded areas everywhere. These robust little plants have heart-shaped, deep green leaves. Flowers can be violet, white or yellow in color.



Wild Ginger: The soft, heart-shaped leaves have long stems from the base of the plant. The maroon-colored flowers are hidden beneath the broad leaf.



Mid-May

Jacob’s Ladder: Leaves arranged in ladder-like manner on the stem. Blue to lavender flowers clusters in timbered bottomlands.



Jack-in-the-Pulpit: A deep woods favorite with inflorescence in the center of a pale green pulpit-like spathe. In the summer, the spathe withers away revealing bright red berries. Also known as “Indian Turnip”.



Virginia Waterleaf: Leaves have white spots that resemble drops of water. Often in extensive colonies, the stems grow 1-3 feet tall. Tight, irregular clusters of white to lavender flowers are held above the leaves on the erect flower stem.

