

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Look for it now in southwest Ohio!

Spring 2022



Cutleaf Toothwort. Photo by Dave Woehr.

Cutleaf Toothwort (*Dentaria laciniata*)

By Dave Woehr, Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist

The Cutleaf Toothwort is a spring wildflower that often grows side-by-side with the well-known Spring Beauty. Both plants can have blooms similar in color and size. However, the Toothwort has four petals (as do all the Mustard family wildflowers) whereas the Spring Beauty has five. The two plants have vastly different leaf geometries, however, making identification easier. Whereas the Spring Beauty's leaf is long, slender, and somewhat grass-like, the Toothwort's leaf pattern is actually a whorl of three deeply cut leaves out of which the flowering stalk emerges. Each leaf in the whorl is about 3 inches in both width and length and palmately cut into three to five lobes with toothed margins. The deep leaf cuts are the characteristic that gives the Toothwort its name. Toothwort is pollinated by bees and reproduces from seed, creeping underground rootstock, and fleshy tooth-shaped tubers. This plant can be found in the spring woods where the soil is rich, well drained, and receives partial sun. Blooming ceases when the tree canopy closes, and adequate sunlight is not received for conducting photosynthesis.

[Hisey Park](#), located outside Waynesville at 5443 Middletown Rd., Corwin, OH 45068, is a wildflower hot spot! To learn more about the spring ephemerals you may see, visit the Ohio Division of Wildlife's [Spring Wildflowers of Ohio Field Guide](#) and check out their [weekly report](#) to see what is currently in bloom.