

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Look for it now in southwest Ohio!

Spring 2022



Photo by Dave Woehr

Blue Phlox (*Phlox divaricate*)

By Dave Woehr, Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist

Blue Phlox, also known as Wild Blue Phlox, Woodland Phlox, or Wild Sweet William, is one of the early signs of spring, standing out prominently along wooded hiking trails here in southern Ohio. One-inch-diameter flowers have five petals that are noticeably notched at the tip. Colors vary from pink to lavender to blue to white. The blooms are clustered at the top of supporting stems a foot or more in height that feature hairy opposite lanceolate to ovate leaves up to 2.5-inches long and ¾-inch wide.

Roots produce stolons (creeping horizontal runners) so that sizable attractive mounds of flowers sometimes appear bedded together due to their unseen spreading underground connection. Bees, butterflies, skippers, and moths pollinate the flowers. Phlox likes partial sunlight provided by the dappled shade conditions common to woodlands in the early to mid-spring. As always, this native wildflower is to be admired and appreciated, but not picked.

[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.