

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Look for it now in southwest Ohio!

Spring 2022



Spring Beauties. Photos by Dave Woehr.

Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*)

By Dave Woehr, Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist

Most people have heard the name Spring Beauty. It is one of our earliest and best-known woodland wildflowers. By late February or early March, its slender green grass-like leaves begin poking through the brown leaves that fell from deciduous trees last autumn. Next, tiny buds about the size of a matchstick head emerge on thin stems that stretch skyward several inches. Following a stretch of warm weather, the buds open revealing beautiful delicate pink or white (often striped) five-petaled flowers no bigger than a dime or a penny.

Once the Spring Beauty blooms it may continue to put on a show into mid-spring as long as it receives adequate moisture and sunlight. It is a native ephemeral that reappears each year from pea-sized bulbs that are just a few inches below the surface of rich undisturbed soils. The bulbs are edible, being somewhat potato-like and much to the liking of small rodents and certain birds such as the Wild Turkey, Ruffed Grouse, and Northern Bobwhite which glean their food from the ground. The flowers produce seeds each year and the plant may be found in dense patches under favorable conditions. It should be observed, admired, and appreciated, but never picked. Snap a picture to take home and you can enjoy the Spring Beauty all year long.

[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.