Conservation Corner

*Conservation Corner is a weekly article produced by the Forest County Land &Water Conservation Department. For more information contact Steve Kircher, County Conservationist-Land Information/GIS Director at 715-478-1387 or by e-mail at* *lcc@co.forest.wi.us**.*

Next week, Conservationists across the State will be participating in a Roadside Blitz. We will be out traveling our respective county roads looking for terrestrial invasive species. As I’ve been traveling, I want to say we are lucky to be in a state with great native wildflowers.

I would like to point out some of the wildflowers you can see on the roadsides and in the woods. We start out with our State Flower- **The Wood Violet.**   The wood violet is a pretty small plant only reaching about 6 inches tall. These beauties can be seen with a variety of colors from purple, blue and white.

**Wild Lupine-**  This plant blooms profusely in spikes with pea-like blue and purple flowers. Palm-shaped leaves surround it, adding extra attraction. This legume is essential to the life cycle of the Karner Blue butterfly, a federally-endangered species native to the Great Lakes region.

Another beauty that are gone for the season is the **Trillium-**  A beautiful white flower, with three large pedals alternating with three green leaves. They are always a sure sign spring has arrived in our woods!

**Blood Root-** These flowers have long pedals (between 6-8) and are bright white. When they grow, they grow wrapped up in their leaves and are short in statue.  Blood root grow from rhizomes in the ground, which rhizomes have poisonous sap in them, thus giving the plant its famous name.   These don’t bloom for long; the petals start to fall after about a week.

Another early spring flower is the **Spring Beauty.** They are another long pedaled flower. A little more delicate than the Blood Root, it has a dull white and pink color. Spring Beauties form one central stem and branch out to even smaller stems containing the blooming flower at the end, creating big patches.

**Jack in the Pulpit-** A hardy, unique woodland flower that emerges and forms a unique cylindrical “pulpit” over which grows a single-leaf canopy. From the pulpit emerges little preaching “Jack.”

With mid-summer here, a lot of us are starting to see **Milkweed**. This tall growing flower is vital for butterfly habitat and food source.

We will also be seeing **Wild Bergamot**, a plant that resembles a purple firework. They stand about 2-4 ft tall. Looks beautiful in prairie fields.

**Something else to watch out for...** [**The Orange Day Lily.**](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=0019oM1h6jkdSttaH1et-lCwEonA2XlhhJS81SqJQSyxEiiXpqqcJN_jcIForDI-1BJmMPh_BxGorubX45_IVyRqpmV2oJIgq4byQO_LPLeWlojllqAxgO8H8DBCVtGTe6GYGj7cbmIk9DbahnBRwrIyZYKaojJRT0QGBSdTnYDqBFk6h6gRVhmHoqAWXOAbSxmbBY57fSga6CF7SiDrW_gl63c7V0aMtES&c=Sb9f2yDceqKZtSRrwJh4rKPwA-cyKdpOXSGYliDBPjNHzR2nAsPMKQ==&ch=nUDJqVcESMbzq8ivRvn0B7_UNYmdH6efl99Jy7pnNii02fD-xYi_tw==) These orange blooms might look pretty, but they are actually an invasive species. These have 6 pedals and NO spots (similar to the Wood Lily.)