

# From My Sit Spot

By Peter Harrity

Sharp-lobed Hepatica



Cut-leaved toothwort



It was cold at my sit spot this morning.

A blanket of wet snow covered the ground and tree branches.

Occasionally, the sun poked through the clouds and bright warmth flooded my face. That felt so good. The sun's warmth penetrated

deeply, but sadly, only fleetingly. Whenever clouds moved in the brisk coldness returned. To

make matters worse, when the wind kicked up I would be pelted by snow blobs blown free from the branches above. I think various poets and songwriters have said that April is the cruelest of months! This morning I began to wonder if that was true.

A few days ago, my wife and I took an early evening hike at Lime Hollow. The ground was free of snow and temperatures were comfortable. We were doing our decades-old, annual ritual of looking for newly emerging wildflowers in the spring woods. We love to see these plants, called spring ephemerals. They bring color and form to a landscape, otherwise dominated by grays and browns. Not only do they hold promise of the summer to come, they are simply beautiful to see. However, this morning in the snow and wind, I was wondering what could possibly cause these plants to brave these changeable early April days? I suppose the burst of sunlight and warmth on my face was a clue. It certainly was enough to keep me sitting in my sit spot. Maybe the warmth and sunlight hitting the forest floor before the trees have leafed out is enough to trigger this annual growth.

My sit spot is in a younger second growth woods dominated by white ash, with scattered old apple trees. I do not have many emerging native wildflowers. However, Lime Hollow has a few locations that are really good for finding these daring wildflowers. Chicago Bog, Lehigh Valley extension, and Mill Pond Trails are some of my favorite places to enjoy the early spring woods. These areas have older hardwood trees and more mature woods. These next few weeks will be the best time to look for the Carolina Spring Beauty (*Claytonia caroliniana*), White Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*), Blue Cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), Sharp-lobed Hepatica (*Anemone acutiloba*), Cut-leaved Toothwort (*Cardamine concatenate*), Squirrel Corn (*Dicentra canadensis*) and Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) to name a few. I hope you can find the time to take a walk along these Lime Hollow trails and experience these exquisite and ephemeral gifts of spring.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy spring. By the way, the phoebes have begun carrying nesting material to the same location under my shed roof. They have been pulling off pieces of old garden twine that was left on my garden fence.

Blue Cohosh, White Trillium and Spring Beauty



For more info on spring wildflowers

<https://www.esf.edu/restorewildflowers/NYS%20Wildflower%20Identification%20Guide.pdf>

<https://www.minnesotawildflowers.info/search?kw=Spring+Beauty>