

Underground Lives of Woodland Wildflowers

Most spring woodland wildflowers are perennials that grow each year from underground stems in the form of rhizomes, bulbs, corms or root like bodies. The plants grow quickly in the spring using nutrients

stored in these structures. They take advantage of sunlight before most trees leaf out and shade the ground. The various species exhibit a variety of underground stems and most also produce seeds.



Jack-in-the-pulpit produces berries (1) containing seeds in the fall. Each seed produces a seedling (2), which transforms into a small corm. Each year the corms grow larger eventually attaining the size of a small potato (3). Rootlets emerge from the side of

the corm (4) and a stalk rises that supports the leaves and flower structures (5). In the fall the plant goes dormant and the leaves shrivel as moisture and nutrients are resorbed into the corm (6).



Mayapples produce plum sized fruits (1), which contain seeds (2). Seedlings (3) develop underground stems called rhizomes. Over time mature plants generate long rhizomes with

numerous leaves (4). Each summer new rhizomes form (5). In the fall the leaves go dormant and new buds form (6) resulting in clusters or rows of mayapples the following spring.



Celandine poppy propagates mainly by seeds contained in pods (1). The tiny seeds scatter over the ground and give rise to numerous seedlings (2).

Over the years the plant grows large and develops a large root like structure (3) that stores nutrients and sends up shoots in the spring.



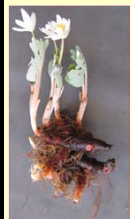
Wild Ginger



Troutlily



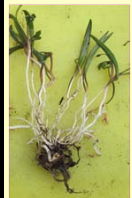
Dutchman's Britches



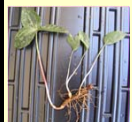
Bloodroot



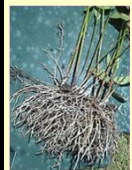
Bluebell



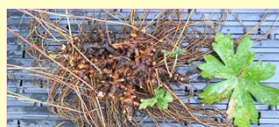
Spring Beauty



Trillium recurvatum



Bellwort



Wild Geranium



Wild Geranium



Trillium recurvatum



True Solomon's Seal



Celandine Poppy