

# Tales From Along the Trail...

## Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)

with Naturalist Cathy Ricks

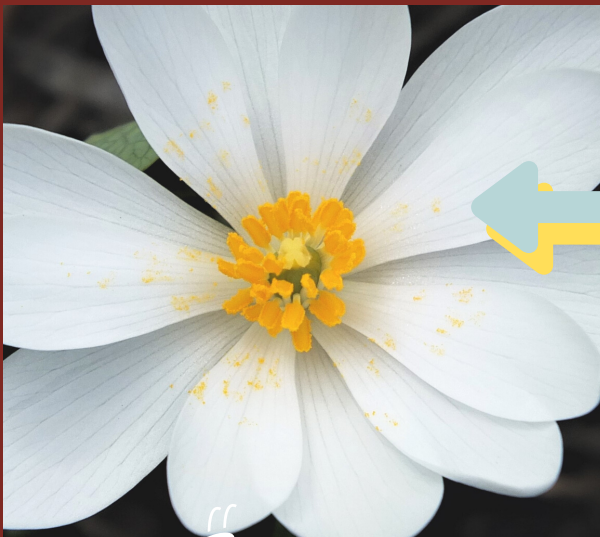


### All Wrapped Up

Bloodroot, one of our loveliest, spring ephemerals, welcomes warm, sunny days with its flower emerging from within its protective, blue-green leaf. The white petals close at night, and on cloudy, rainy, and cool days (below 46 degrees).

### Our Charming Native Poppy

Bloodroot's name comes from the acid and toxic blood-red sap found in the roots. Once a traditional dye, the bloodroot is becoming increasingly rare and should be left to safely enjoy along our woodland trails.



### Fairweather Pollinator Friend

Only pollen is produced by the Bloodroot (no nectar) with each short-lived flower lasting about 1-3 days. Insects can be seen gathering the pollen and helping to pollinate the flowers. After the third day, they can close and self-pollinate if needed.



### Ant Picnics

Bloodroot seeds are spread by ants (myrmecochory). Part of the seed is an attractive food for the ants (elaiosome). The ants take the seeds to the picnic (their nest), eat the elaiosomes, then toss the seeds into their compost "garbage" where they will germinate. Bloodroot's leaves disappear by early summer leaving us to wait for next spring's greeting.

