

Horticulture Report April 2023

Spring Ephemerals

Ephemerals are native plants that surprise you in early spring and disappear within a week or two, leaving no foliage and no sign that they were there! I find it best to plant ephemerals in one area of the garden where there is little to dig up, usually an area of ground cover. The morning of garden club I went outside to check and brought 3 blooming ephemerals with me: *Mertensia virginica*, *Sanguinaria canadensis* multiplex, and *Anemone ranunculoides*.

Mertensia virginica (Virginia Bluebells)

They appear March to April and are native from North Carolina to Ontario and west to Minnesota. In flower, it stands 18-24" high and the bud is pink. As it matures to blue it signals to pollinators that the nectar and pollen are available. Once the pollen is gone the flower petals drop to signal pollinators not to stop there. The foliage rapidly fades, then disappears. They naturalize in lightly shaded well drained, moist woodland soils in zones 3-8. More information can be found in the Spring 2023 edition of the National Gardener.

Sanguinaria canadensis multiplex (double Bloodroot). The leaf is classic and can be identified easily prior to flowering. This double bloodroot only lasts for a few days before the petals drop, but are gorgeous. My plants were given to me by FM Mooberry, and renowned local horticulturist.

Anemone ranunculoides (yellow flowered wood anemone)

Other ephemerals common in this area which I am able to grow: Dutchmans Breeches (*Dicentra Cucullaria*), Trout Lily (*Erythronium Americanum*), Shooting Star (*Dodecatheon media*), *Uvularia* (Bellwort), Trillium, May Apple, Solomon's Seal, Twinleaf (*Jeffersonia diphylla*), Spring Beauties (*Claytonia virginica*), single Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) and woodland spider lily (*Hymenocallis occidentalis*).